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RANDOM RHYMES

AND

POEMS *for* HOME FOLKS

By EDWIN A. NASH, M. D.

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RANDOM RHYMES
AND
POEMS *for* HOME FOLKS

By
EDWIN A. NASH, M. D.
PETERSON, IOWA

This little volume is inscribed to
all lovers of Poetry, and is espe-
cially intended for "home folks"
those in the every-day walk of life.
—*The Author*



*"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
I love not MAN the less, but Nature more."*

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E. A. NASH, M. D.
PETERSON, IOWA

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Introduction

I LAY no claim to literary fame. This little volume is written and dedicated to the great body of the Common People, and it is they, rather than the over-critical and discriminating, whom I hope will find comfort and recreation in its perusal.

My verse has been spontaneous—most of it having been dashed off in spare moments of an active life. Many have been written on the spur of the moment, so to speak, some in a few minutes, some in an hour, and, with the exception of one or two, none have taken over a day.

You may ask why, or how, I came to write verse, and I will have to say that I do not know. I have always dabbled in poetry. When a boy in school, or following the plow during vacations, in the harvest field, while attending college, and during the busiest time of my work, I have composed some of my best selections.

Sometimes a cartoon will suggest a poem, so will a scene, a sermon, or an article read. I can never tell when I am to write one. It may be weeks, or months, between times, then a handshake, or an appealing sight, will set the lines to flowing. Once the inclination came to write to my mother in verse and this resulted in a letter of some thirteen pages—all without being planned. Anything that particularly strikes me seems to form itself into verse at once. Many of my poems have been composed during a busy day; part composed, perhaps, on the road while making calls, the rest off and on through the day, as opportunity offered. When I begin one, usually the inspiration keeps up until I have completed it; once done, I seem to be entirely through with it and can do little or nothing with it afterwards. Inspiration—"A Silent Friend," one of my poems—seems to define this as well as anything. Anything that interests me intensely is thought

of in terms of verse. I venture to say that many poems composed by very obscure authors would not look at all bad mixed in among the poems of some of the more renowned. Each man and woman is a law unto himself, or herself,—they fill their little niche and pass on.

Many of my poems have appeared in *The Medical World*, of Philadelphia, *The American Journal of Clinical Medicine*, of Chicago, *The Medical Pickwick*, of New York, and in the secular press, and in the Masonic journals. Many have been leading a sort of vagabond existence, here and there, and some have found their way into collections of poems in book form and seem to be successful. Others have been used in Lyceum and Chautauqua work, and now I have concluded to look them up, and I herewith offer them under the title, "Random Rhymes and Poems for Home Folks." When the evenings are long, or there comes a time when you want something to read, pick up "Random Rhymes" and glance over some of the titles that appeal to you, or look at the illustrations. Perhaps you will become interested and be tempted to reread many of them when opportunity and inclination permit. Many will no doubt find in them much of the unique.

It is my especial wish that this little volume may find its way into the homes of the Common People.

E. A. NASH, M. D.,
Peterson, Iowa

YULE-TIDE THOUGHTS—TO MOTHER

(A Photo—Past and Present)

I am proud of the photo you sent me to-day,
It brings to my memory the dearest old scenes;
It pictures the home of my childhood's glad play,—
The Old Home—when I left it—a youth in my “teens.”

It brings me right back to those bright days of yore,
Before I had learned the sad use of a sigh!
How I wish I was just a youngster once more,
And could eat as much candy, plum-pudding and pie!

How well I recall when each Christmas came round,
How our stockings were hung on the nails on the door—
How Santa Claus came with his reindeers swift bound,
And filled them all up from his wonderful store!

I again see the morning of each Christmas day,
When as soon as awake, down the stairs we all flew!
I see Grandma right there, and once more hear her say:
“Good morning to all—Merry Christmas to you!”

The swift years have sped, but past scenes do not fade,
They are yet in the mind, just as bright as of yore;
When we pause and reflect on the change time has made,—
Vanished faces come back and are with us once more.

Ah yes—forms and faces, and old scenes reappear,
And cast a bright lustre on memory's long hall—
Like the wind in its fancy, my mind journeys near,
And reviews the home circle—my mother and all.

Your photo enchants me—it brings back the old days—
The richest and purest that ever I've known!
There's a world full of ladies, but none that I praise,
With such ardent devotion—as mother alone!

The soul gathers round it, a tangible form
Of inanimate matter—a house that must fall,
For sooner or later it yields to the storm,—
But the Soul *never changeth*—it liveth through all.

So thus in the changes of life that have come
In my nine years of absence from under your roof,
I never have changed—I have seen the same sun,—
The smile of old faces—affection's sure proof!

Let us not change! Let us all gather home on that day
Of the Christmas-tide, as of old may it seem!
So let none of you think that I am away,
Nor that one chair is vacant—though Bert is not seen.

Yes—we all shall be there in the spirit I ween,—
The Old Home shall rejoice at the meeting so rare,
And when Santa drives up, he'll think it a dream
When he finds all our stockings again hanging there!

Thus let the years pass;—by the bright eye of Hope
We shall pierce the dark clouds of earthly despair,—
And continue no longer in darkness to grope—
But catch the bright sun-beams—from friends “over there!”

How sweet to remember our childhood and play,—
But I pause in my thought—where have the days flown?
And where are the playmates? Some fell by the way,
And others shall gather the grain they have sown.

The years swiftly pass, and great changes roll on,—
We know not how long we are destined to stay,—
So let us be hopeful,—we've a lesson to con,
That our days may be blest as we travel life's way.

Let us conquer our trials through life as we go—
All depends on ourselves, whatever we do—
We can build each an altar, more white than the snow,
By being kind-hearted and noble and true.

Then let us all listen and bend willing ears,
As onward we journey along life's vast plains—
Let us banish all murmur, all weeping and fears,
And hear the glad anthem each Christmas proclaims!

A. D. 1902



MY HOME BY THE SEA

We have a small home just down by the sea,
'Tis but a small hut, but it's pretty inside;
It may not suit you, but it looks good to me—
And oh, to be there with the oncoming tide!

'Tis sweet to be there on a hot summer's day,
To feel the cool breezes that over you sweep,
To see the great waves as they wander in play,
And to hear the sweet sounds that would lull you to sleep.

I wish you were with us some bright moonlight night,
To view the expanse, as we sit by my door,
Hear the sea-eagles scream, see the gulls' dizzy flight,
And to watch the mad waves as they pound on the shore!

Oh, give me my little home close by the sea,
My weans and my wife, and I'll never ask more.
They may not suit you, but they look good to me,
When we're down by the sea by our own cottage door.

I'll rest in my little home down by the sea,
Which I wouldn't exchange with a king on his throne.
It may not suit you, but it looks good to me,
And I'll live there till God calls me home to His own!

WORDS—OR WREATHS?

If you'll give me some attention while I'm living,
And not leave it all to give when I am gone,
It will mean that I'll appreciate the giving
And thank you—when I cannot later on.

A smile, a word of comfort, is a pleasure
And it helps to clear the dark skies overhead,
And I feel that now 'twill help me in a measure—
For I may not know you did it when I'm dead.

So let's cheer our friends a little while they're living,
We can find so much to praise, if we will try.
One flower of joy that springs from out such giving
Is worth a million roses when they die!

THE DESERTED HOUSE

One evening, 'twas just before sunset,
I'd been out in the country to dine;
And was pegging my way toward the village.
For my wife said, "Return before nine!"

I still had five miles to travel,
And the roads were desperately poor,
And up hill and down hill I plodded,
But making the best of my tour.

Well, to keep to the thread of my story,
Of that which I'm about to relate,—
For so plain does it now lie before me,
I can tell you it all if you'll wait.

I had passed Squire Brown's near the turnpike,
Not a sinner or saint had I met;
When a spectacle then met my vision,—
'Twas a sight I shall never forget.

A lone house with its windows all missing,
And everything gone from within;
The fire-place crumbled to pieces,
The roof long ago fallen in.

The outbuildings gone to destruction,
Scarce a trace of their foundations left;
The fences decayed, and the orchard
Looked neglected, bleak and bereft.

Being somewhat fatigued with my journey,
I dropped myself down by the gate;
And gazed at the weather-worn cottage,—
Now comes the queer tale I'll relate:

I hadn't looked at it a minute,
Till a drowsiness over me fell,—
My eyes closed, yet still I could see it,
And plainly the story I'll tell.

The place all around beamed with splendor,
And children were romping with glee;
An old man was peacefully slumbering
On a chair 'neath an old apple tree.

On each side of the path to the cottage,
Were flowers of most every hue,—
The door-step was caged with sweet blossoms,
Some red and some white and some blue.

I could hear the old bell ring for dinner
And see the boys come with the team;
I could see the old man in the garden,
And all was as once it did seem.

The children who came after school time,
Paused a moment to swing on the gate;
With laughter and chorus they greeted
Their parents who did anxiously wait.

I could see the boys grow up to manhood,
Say "Good-bye," to the home that they left;
One by one they all seemed to vanish,
Till the place was entirely bereft.

The old folks were growing more feeble,
Till time at last took them away,—
When the children again came together,
To bid a farewell to their clay.

Now for year in and out scarce a person,
Was seen to visit the home,—
It seemed to soon dwindle and perish,
When the children had gone to roam.

Again I was gazing upon it,
Now the scene looked the same as before;
I can see the old moss-covered door-sill
The old rotten walks and the floor.

Tall weeds were in place of the flowers,
The trees by the storms had been cleft,—
And around that once beautiful cottage
Scarce a beauty of nature is left.

I wandered on toward the village,
And the moon did so dreamily shine,—
But one thing I well can remember,
I didn't return before nine!

THEY DO NOT MEAN IT

"I wish I were dead," I have heard men say;
Of course they don't mean it, for when they get ill,
"I guess I'll drop in on the doctor today
And have him prescribe some kind of a pill!"

"The weather is bad and I won't venture out,
A man should have sense to stay in when it rains;
I'm afraid that a walk would play hob with my gout,
As it is, I'm 'bout dead with my rheumatiz pains."

"Say, Maw! call the doctor, have him come right away,
Don't you see I am aching and writhing in pain?
If it gets any worse, I can't live through the day,
And arrange with him, Maw, just to drop in again!"

"I wish I were dead!"—Quit your lyin', old man,
You couldn't be killed with a club I declare,—
'Tis a foolish remark; do the best that you can,
Be content with your lot, be it cloudy or fair.



When the preacher comes to dinner we children act so meek,
The hens begin to cackle, but the roosters take a sneak;

WHEN THE PREACHER COMES TO DINNER

When the preacher comes to dinner, Ma fixes things just
right!

She mops and dusts and tidies up, so things look nice and
bright,—

She gets the Family Bible out, and lays it on the stand,
And warns us we must act just so, and follow her command.
The meal she cooks when he's to come is fit for saint or
sinner,

We're always glad and never sad, when the preacher comes to
dinner!

When the preacher comes to dinner Sis acts so different-like,
She never scolds or teases me, nor bothers little Mike;
And brother Frank's a perfect saint, with sweet angelic
smile—

At other times he's quite the biggest rascal in the pile.
We all are very courteous to the Reverend Mr. Skinner,
And try to look and act our best when he is here to dinner

When the preacher comes to dinner we all behave so nice,
 And when he asks the blessing we're still as any mice.
 Then we never pass our plates for another piece of pie,
 And Father never lights his pipe, I think I know just why!
 When Brother Jack drives up at noon, we hear his horses
 whinner,
 Someway, somehow, they seem to know the preacher's come
 to dinner!

When the preacher comes to dinner we children act so meek,
 The hens begin to cackle, but the roosters take a sneak;
 And I have always noticed when the preacher starts to go,
 He reads to us a chapter, with a word of prayer, you know.
 When the preacher comes, the meals we get are fit for saint
 or sinner,
 We're always glad and never sad, when the preacher comes
 to dinner!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

(Acrostic)

J-une's fragrant breeze and autumn's golden hues
 A-re interwoven in your soothing verse.
 M-any a time, when I have felt the worse—
 E-nsnared by that grim elf we call "the blues,"
 S-eeing a pile of books upon the shelf.

W-hich shall I take to rid me of that frown?
 H-igh there upon the shelf, I take you down.
 I sit and read till I have cured myself,
 T-hen dream at night about your funny ways.
 C-heered by your merry rhymes of beast and bird.
 O-h, Jim, I cannot seem to find a word—
 M-y muse is all unequal to your praise!
 B-ut I can give advice to all the young:

R-ead Riley, his great gift sets him apart.
 I read his rhymes on nature and on art
 L-ight as the white-winged clouds he soars among.
 E-ach tribute from the muses that he brings,
 Y-ields friends to nature's verse that soars and sings.

WITH YOUR CONSCIENCE AND GOD

Say, what do you think, in the dead of the night,
When you find you're alone with your conscience and God?
Does everything, then, seem to balance up right?
Are you satisfied, then, with the path you have trod?

The way you have lived—has it served you the best?
In a word, are you doing the best that you can?
In the dead of the night, with God as your guest,
Can you say in the silence, "I've acted the man?"

Alone in the silence with conscience and self,
And God watching all with Omnipotent Eye,
Oh, then you may think of your treasured-up pelf—
Oh, then you must pray to your Father on high.

Alone with your conscience, what scenes reappear;
Some casting a lustre on memory's long hall,
While others look dark, as your mind journeys near
And cause you to shudder, to think of them all!

Awake, O my conscience, prepare ye the way.
While yet there is time some wrongs to erase.
Oh, put on your armor! Oh, cleave through the fray,
Oh, go ye, triumphant, your Master to face!

PASSAGE

A little play, a lot of toil,
Some sweet content, but more of care:
Some love, some hate, some peace—turmoil,—
And then—a heap of earth somewhere.

I. O. O. F.

(Acrostic)

I-nvincible are we, immutable Fraternity,
O-ur good Samaritan leads the way;
O-ur chains forged for Eternity,
F-riendship, Love and Truth,—holds sway!

“SOMEBODY’S MOTHER”

I have seen her oft in the thronging street;
With the busy crowd, I have passed her by,
Noting that many, with hurrying feet
Would stop, then gaze with a wistful eye,
And pity her there, infirm and old,
Facing the winter’s blast, so cold
“Somebody’s Mother.”

Yes, I see her yet! ’Twas a Christmas day.
She stood at the corner of Market Place;
And people but glanced as they streamed that way,
But to pass her there with her wrinkled face,
And weary limbs, I can see her stand,
With none to offer a helping hand,
“Somebody’s Mother.”

Her eyes are dim. She is failing fast.
Her feeble step and her locks of snow
Denote that her youth and strength have passed.
And I see her yet—as when long ago
In kindest wise she was glad and free,
And played with children upon her knee,
“Somebody’s Mother.”

One morn I sat in a rich-carved pew
Where people were dressed in their raiment fine,—
And I thought as I watched the favored few
Crowned there with an air of love divine,
“Who is the one who is poor and old?
Where is the one who is out in the cold?
“Somebody’s Mother.”

’Twas a day in June, I shall ne’er forget.
The birds were singing a mournful song;
I hear their notes as I listen yet,
For they seemed to sing as we marched along,—
Whose is the funeral here, today,
Who is the one who has passed away?
“Somebody’s Mother.”



I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

(Apologies to Hood)

"I remember, I remember,
The house where I was born;
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn',"—
And if we didn't get up quick
But just inclined to lay,—
Dad, with a great big hickory stick
'Bout beat our breath away!

I remember, I remember,
Dad took a right-hand swing,—
'Cause I was listenin', possum-like,
To swallows on the wing.
My legs they flew like lightnin' then,
That are so clumsy now,
Our swimmin' pool cold hardly cool
That bunch upon my brow!

I remember, I remember,
The cows both red and white;
We tied their tails together, and
They pulled with all their might.
We dug all sister's tulips up
Sucked eggs that mother set,—
And hung Dad's favorite English pup—
That tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember,
Just where we used to wade,
And sneak Ma's pies and doughnuts out
As soon as they were made.
One time she tracked us to our lair,
And made us awful sore;
I sat one side upon a chair
A week—or maybe more!

I remember, I remember,
That old beech tree nearby;
Where Dad oft cut a slender switch,
And swung it awful high.
'Twas seldom then I heeded it,
(It surely did annoy)
But now I see I needed it
More,—when I was a boy!

DREAMING OF MOTHER

Oh, Mother, just last night, I had a dream;
I thought that I could see you, plain as day;
I heard you talk in that old-fashioned way,
And all, again, was as it once did seem.

Though five long years have passed since last we met,
I could not see that you were older grown—
Save in your hair, I noticed that there shone
A silver tress I had not seen as yet.

SINCE BABY CAME

Somehow I feel more of a man,
Since baby came,

And closer other children scan,
Since baby came—

The book of life has turned a leaf,
And put an end to all my grief,
To tell the truth, I've found relief
Since baby came.

The world seems bright, and people smile
Since baby came,

My wife is joyful all the while,
Since baby came—

She seems to sing a sweet refrain
Nor finds she time e'er to complain,
While I've worked on with might and main—
Since baby came.

Life's hovering clouds have passed away,
Since baby came,

How bright the sky, how short the day
Since baby came—

My friends declare I'm full of fun!
Where have I been—what have I done?
Life's happy days have just begun
Since baby came.

I've learned some other things in life,
Since baby came,—

I've learned to think more of my wife,
Since baby came—

I've learned to sanction woman's rights
In scaling life's tempestuous heights,
And learned again, to sit up nights,
Since baby came.

I've found no fault with any one—
Since baby came,

I laugh and joke—rejoice in pun,
Since baby came—

And wear a smile upon the street,
Shake hands with every one I meet,—
Hear nothing else but, "come and treat,"
Since baby came.

I think much more of woman-kind
Since baby came,

My path through life seems far less blind
Since baby came—

The world no longer frowns so cold,
Or somehow I have grown more bold,
Life's burdens shrunk a hundred-fold
Since baby came.

The wind without blows not so drear,
Since baby came,

My step is light, my mind is clear
Since baby came,—

Since then I haven't heaved a sigh,
The threat'ning clouds have drifted by,
And sure I know the reason why,
Since baby came.

I closer human nature read,
Since baby came,

True love, kind act is now my creed,
 Since baby came—

I'll watch what e'er I do and say,
As I plod from day to day—
And know success will come my way,
 Since baby came.

My troubles all have been released
 Since baby came,

Somehow my kisses have increased
 Since baby came—

I have no foes, all men are good—
Such is the bliss of parenthood,
And God's great love's more understood
 Since baby came.

NOTE—This baby was named Ruby Irene Nash. We all feel proud of the achievements of our own children, so I want to say that this girl carried off the honors at Upper Iowa University and received the Class Scholarship and \$100.00 in her Freshman year, 1920. Mr. Cass was an alumnus of the College and left a scholarship there.

January 19, 1901

ROBERT BURNS

O, thou great power of verse and song,
Who sung us strains the whole day long;
The greatest gifts to thee belong
 In rustic verse—
To slander or to do thee wrong,
 Would be a curse!

I see him on the banks of Ayr,
A merry ploughman, as it were—
Musing with Nature's art so fair,
 Sublime and grand;
Could I but steal one moment there
 And grasp his hand!

His heart was full of love for birds,
He greeted them with pleasing words
And from the hills the lowing herds
 Returned his call—
His motto was true Brotherhood
 For one and all!

All hail to thee, thou Bard of yore,
Who did Masonic light adore—
We greet you from that distant shore,
 A silent guest—
We fain would hear your Muse outpour
 Of Scotland's best!



We, after meetin' Sunday night, wuz walkin' arm-in-arm,
I up and axed her straight t' be my wife!
Says I, "You know, Elizer, we'd be happy on the farm."
She said right out, "Why, Jake, you bet yer life!"

DEDERCATION

To my lovin' wife, to whom I hev bin indettered fer a
help-mate these thirty year, an' from whom, more than any
other human bein', I hev received my poeretic Inspirations uf
what th' real, true woman ort ter be, the next four poerms
are humly an' lovin'ly dedercated, with th' prayer thet some
"ferlorn an' shipwrecked brother, seein', may tuk heart again."

"UNCLE JAKE."

A HIT

Said I, "When I git married, I'll bet I make a hit;
I'll git a wife that ain't afraid of work—
One uv the industrious kind that can git up and git,
And one that simply don't know how to shirk.

"I don't want a New Woman—she'd hev too much t' say;
She'd spend each dollar that I'd save—and more.
I want one uv the thrifty kind that watches market-day,
And hez the eggs all packed the night before.

"We won't have many children. Now there is neighbor Brown
He hez a raft around to clothe and feed,
And I'll be switched, when he goes startin' off t' town
He hez a score of children in the lead!

"A feller don't want many; they cost a pile t' keep—
You know a feller has t' sort of gauge.
I think that maybe we could live quite snug and cheap
With one or two t' comfort our ol' age."

How swift the time goes by! Why, it's thirty year ago
That me and 'Lizer started keepin' house!
And we hev hed our share uv ups and downs, you know,
But I must say she's bin a modern spouse.

But now, before I tell you how we've lived this thirty year,
I orter tell you how I gained her hand.
The thing seemed mighty pressin'—everything was clear;
'Lize wuz the only lady in the land.

'Bout this time I tuck t' goin' t' meetin' Sunday night,
And 'Lizer seemed t' be attendin', too,
We both wuz very anxious, "workin' fer the right"
But both, perhaps, had other thoughts in view.

We, after meetin' Sunday night, wuz walkin' arm-in-arm,
I up and axed her straight t' be my wife!
Says I, "You know, Elizer, we'd be happy on the farm."
She said right out, "Why, Jake, you bet yer life!"

I tell you it wuz mighty plain it pleased her to a "T"
(It allus does when wimen hev their way)
She hed no sooner said it than she snuggled up t' me
And whispered in my ear, "Jake, name the day."

The years have shown I made a hit in gittin' 'Lizer Drake,
And she says she hit it right with Jake Dundee;
And I'll tell you what, we neither made a very big mistake
When I tuck 'Lize, and she in turn tuck me!

"UNKLE JAKE."

THE NEW WIMMIN

By UNKLE JAKE

"She sot like patience on a monerment"
—Shakesper

Things hev come t' sich a passin'
In this changin' world of our'n,
Lately I hev bin a-wonderin'
Ef the thing ain't kinder sour'n'.

Years ago, when me and Lizer
Started up t' keepin' house,
We never dreamed of sich fandangles
As are used by modern spouse.

Wimmin now are gittin' bolder,
Try t' immertate the men,
Bob their hair and wear stiff collars—
And even trousers, now and then.

Sweet as honey in its comb-walls
Are the old ways unto me,
But these—New—produce "reactions"
Thet are new t' chemistry!

'Bout a week ago, our Betsy
Kinder got the bloomer craze;
Now she's ridin' on our filly—
Up and down, while people gaze.

And she rides a kind of tandem,
With a dude she don't know well;
Has a cap like Ebenezer's—
Says she wants t' cut a swell.

When I see these bran' New Wimmin,
Marchin' down our village street,
Makin' "goo-goo eyes" they call 'em,
At the fellers thet they meet.

Why, it jest riles me all over!
Lizer'll shake her sides and laff,
Jest because when we wuz married
I nicknamed her, "better half."

Shakespeare's good er nuf ter bank on,
His opinern can't be spurned—
What he didn't know uf lovin'—
No one else hes ever larned!

I like ter read old Shakespeare's tale,
About that lovely park,
Whar Venus an' Adonis come—
A Buck an' doe—ter spark!

Wimmin think they've bin imposed on
Sence the time uv Adam's fall,
And thet men should do their biddin'
And jest mind 'em—thet is all.

Ef our Betsy keeps the notion
Uv a-follerin' up this plan,
Somethin' will be sure to happen,
Ef, at last, she gits her man.

The "old" woman is an angel,
And she loves the good old ways.
This "new" woman is an angle
Fer geometry t' praise!

And this New Woman's allus fussin'—
Seems t' be continual war;
And their troubles all are risin'
From the thing they're patterin' for.

Lately, I've tuk pains t' watch 'em,
And it kinder seems t' me
They are tryin' now t' rule us
Through a sort uv anarchy.

Christ's own mother sot a pattern
Fer the female world t' see;
'Twas her patience and forbearance
Paved the road t' Calvary.

Men-folks like a gentle woman,
One thet doesn't gad about,
But stays at home and 'tends her chickens
And sometimes helps th' men-folks out.

Lizer says she is contented
With a feller sich as me,
And I really think she loves me
With a true sincerity.

So don't think, my gentle reader,
I'm erposed t' wimmin's rights,
Fer they have their sphere uv action
And, I'm sure, need fear no slights.

So, Lizer, put the kettle on,
And let us hev a sup;
We'll court again, as once we did—
Don't wake the children up!

HOLD THEM HOSSES, SALLER ANN

Poërm by UNCLE JAKE

I hav always told my dorter
Womman is as good as man—
But you hev to check 'em, sorter,
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann!

When th' fellers cum to court 'er,
All a-tryin' fer her han',
I jest say, "Look here, Jane Porter,
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann!"

Wife and me is quite out-spoken—
It is hard fer us to stan';
Hope our hearts will not be broken—
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann!

'Spect I am too tender-hearted,
And I'll stand it if I can,
But I feel—th' tears hev started.
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann.

On her stand, th' other mornin',
Ma, she found a note t' Dan;
It looks rather like a warnin'—
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann!

I was walkin' by th' medder,
As they passed she waved her han';
I can't blame him if he weds her.
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann.

When my court I wuz a payin',
When I won her mother's han',
Mebbe some one else wuz sayin',
Hold them hosses, Saller Ann!



THE DROUTH

THE DROUTH

By UNCLE JAKE

All las' year we had er famin'
 People prayed an' prayed fer rain;
 Und we thought through all th' season
 Rain would never come again.

Neighbor Jones ploughed up his hay-field,
 Turned his cattle in th' corn;
 Sed he never recerlected
 Sich a time since he wuz born.

No one in th' little village
 Had er mind like Captain Scrogg;
 He declared old Mother Nature
 In her turnin's slipped a cog.

Deacon Brown complained at meetin'
 Thet th' ground wuz gettin' dry;
 Und insisted thet th' brethern
 Send er tribute to th' sky.

“Brethern,” said he, “we kin fetch it
By petition from erbove;
Hev yer buckets out to catch it,
All it lacks is Christian Love.

Seemed as if th’ more we asked em,
Every sabbath thet we met;
Mother Earth wuz gettin’ drier,
We wuz prayin’ fer th’ wet.

Kinder seems th’ more we’re tryin’
To upbuild our little cause;
Somethin’s sure t’ cum amongst us,
Und upset ol’ Natur’s laws.

I hev thought sometimes when gazin’
Up into ther starry sphere;
Cud it be th’ hand uv Natur’
Guidin’ us in footsteps here?

But in everythin’ we’re doin’
Whether it be work er play,
Ther would be no cause fer ruin,
Ef we tuk th’ Christian way.

But our faith wuz gettin’ stronger,
Und th’ clouds wuz gatherin’ fast;
Lightnin’ streaked across th’ heavens
Now th’ drouth wud soon be past.

Ere th’ day hed passed th’ rain came,
Und we thought ’twould never stop;
So th’ Lord wuz very gracious
Helpin’ us t’ save th’ crop.



ON KEATS

(Canzonet)

Oh, Keats! whene'er I turn those leaves of thine,
And see those radiant gems arranged by thee,
Like stars reflected in the great life-sea—
'Tis then I feel the poet's nature shine,
And shed its lustre, as the God of day
Doth rise and banish fog and damp and dark!
'Tis then I hear the first notes of the lark,
And morning drives with her bright rosy light
From my enchanted heart the mists away!

TRIBUTE TO MY WIFE

My sweet little wife,
You're the pride of my life;
The center of all my joy,—
If it wasn't for you,
As I travel life through,
This world would be strife and annoy!

I often have thought,
If to poverty brought;
And friends I should look for in vain,—
I'd have nothing to rue,
If I only had you,—
You'd surely bring sunshine from rain!

KEEPING RIGHT

Keep your heart right, and be a real man—
Under the guiding Eye that watches you,—
Keep your body pure, do the best you can,
Love leading you in all you say or do.
Under the canopy above, let justice reign
Xmas and Happy New Years beckon on.
Kindle the cross of truth,—obedience, pain,—
Labor for the day will soon be gone.
Allegiance to God, and to the Master's call
Never refusing that helping hand to all!

A REFLECTION

See yonder life-boat toss amid the waves;
The rolling white-caps glisten in the sun,
And lash against the harbor, one by one,
As if they fain would cover up the graves
Of those who once had sailed the mighty main;
Upon her surge full many a boat is lost;
The cruel waves have, unrelenting, tossed
Full many a bark that ne'er will rise again.

TO FATHER

Well Father! It is New Year's night,
The last night of the year—
There now remains but two short hours,
The end will soon be here.

Another year is past and gone,
And stamped on memories' page;
How swift the years go speeding by,
Each adding to our age.

What changes the past years have brought,
And we are older grown—
Your children who have gone away,
Have children of their own!

Your mile-stones now have almost reached
To three score years and ten—
I only hope you may be spared
To live as long again.

Your axe has made the forest ring
Loud with the timbers crash,
Down came the maple and the oak,
The hickory, elm and ash.

And often when the boistrous gales
Were blowing all the day,
You went to town with loads of wood,
And walked behind the sleigh.

Thus working hard, you stemmed the tide,
And steered your own canoe,
And cleared and tilled the rugged soil,
And reared a family too.

Those days are past, and yet they seem
As fresh, and clear, and bright,
As when a boy I longed to see
The New Year come in sight.

It seemed so long to childish eyes,
For the new year to come—
But now he comes before I see
My yearly duties done!

Those days of old I see to-night,
As when I was a boy—
I only wish this fair New Year,
Could bring me just such joy!

Ah! I remember how you worked,
And toiled the live-long day—
While we were having a fine time,
At school or in our play!

You suckered the "terbacker" leaves,
And bound the sheaves all day—
And took your stand at cradling
And mowed the grain away.

I hope you have the best of health,
To greet this new-born year—
And mingle with your many friends,
The same old pioneer!

So do not think that you are old,
Or burdened down with care,
Although you may step slower now,
Or find some silvered hair!

Yes, let us clasp the hand of Fate,
And bravely bear our lot—
Remembering that we are two men
Who never have forgot.

The beauty of a father's love,
The duty of a son!
So thus I bid this year "good night."
The New Year has begun.

Hark! Hear the midnight bells ring out,
To greet the new-born year!
The old year makes his last adieu—
The New Year now is here!

Still may the years long come and go,
And bring you peace and joys—
Still may you keep a joyful heart,
And mingle with "the boys!"

New Year's Memories—1903

THE LINGUIST

He is just a common farmer,
And I think they call him Harmer,
And he has a sort of wabble in his walk.
He is very small of stature,
But I'll tell you what he'll match yer
When it comes to gab the different kinds of talk!

He can gabble good in Spanish,
And just rattle off the Danish,—
I hardly know a brogue he cannot speak.
He is extra good in Russian,
And is right at home on Prussian,
And I hear he's very fluent in the Greek.

He's a whale, they say, in German,
And can talk quite good in Burman;
And they say he likes the Finnish very much.
He can talk with one from Asia,
With a speed that will amaze you—
And he talks some forty 'leven kinds of Dutch!

He can talk the Injun handy,
And the Norske and Swedish dandy,
And they say in speaking French he's very fond.
He could make a barrel of money
With a show!—And ain't it funny
That he doesn't take a trip across the pond?

He could take in old Judea,
Persia, Chile and Korea,
For he'd sure to be at home in any port.
He could stop at any station,
Looking for some stray relation—
My! but he would surely have a world of sport!

Some one asked him kinda kiddish,
"Do you laugh and joke in Yiddish?"
He just smiled and said, "Yes, sir, you bet I do!"
But they say it made him spunky,
When they brought him in a monkey,
"No!" said he, "I only speak a word or two!"

I WISHT TER GUBS THE KIDS WUZ BACK

'Taint no use talkin' 'bout it, Maw,
We're both as lonesome as Sam Hill;
You know George kinder leaned ter Paw,
And you jist sorter petted Bill.

When they wuz here, we quarrelled and fussed—
We could not well of each keep track;
But now they're gone, and I'll be cussed
I wisht ter gubs the kids wuz back!

We hear the old clock ticking' on,
Things are so solemn-like and still—
We miss 'em now that they are gone.
Say, Maw, I hev neglected Bill . . .

And you hev slighted George, you know;
You fussed with him in helpin' pack—
It sorter strikes me like a blow;
I wisht ter gubs the kids wuz back!

We know they kinder raised old Ned,
And kept us stewin' like the Dutch;
They paid no 'tention what we said—
P'raps, after all, we jawed too much.

I tell you what, I'm sick at heart;
We're out of the old beaten track—
It sorter makes the tears ter start . . .
I wisht ter gubs the kids wuz back!

Maw sets aroun' and looks so glum,
And views their pictures on the stand.
If they wuz here they'd make things hum
And play their music like the band.

I simply mope aroun' the room,
And swear it is a lonesome shack—
We feel like twenty tons of gloom,
And wisht ter gubs the kids wuz back!

When they git back, I'll tell you, Maw,
We'll let 'em give their college yell—
Play rag-time, too, and maybe Paw
Will jine 'em fer a little spell.

We hev two very clever boys—
I wisht they's here ter have a snack,
We're longin' fer their fun and noise,
And wisht ter gubs the kids wuz back!

TWILIGHT

The sun has dropped down yonder hill,
Each bird has sought its sheltering nest;
The weary world is calm and still—
Again the day is hushed to rest.

I, silent, gaze upon the sky
And see the murky clouds take flight
In glimmering light that passes by,
Between the day and coming night.

The twilight steals across the lea—
The air by any sound unstirred,
Save that from yonder poplar tree
The hooting of the owl is heard.

REMINISCENT

Dedicated to LOUIS BLOCK, Past Grand Master, now
Fraternal Correspondent Iowa A. F. & A. M.,
Davenport, Iowa.

Please don't make too much fuss
When I pass out. Don't discuss

My faults and failings—words are paltry things—
I shall not fly away on wings,

But linger, unperceived, where old friends stray,
And sort of listen what they have to say,

So please be careful how you act—
Use tact.

Of course 'twill be all right
If you look solemn, quite,

But I've a hunch
Some of the bunch

Will maybe let a little grin
Come stealing in,

When in a reminiscent mood.
Don't brood,

When I am on the other shore,
I'll still be optimistic, as of yore,

And try to make St. Peter leave me here,
Right on this sphere.

I must not be contrary-like,
But it will suit me best to hike

Just where I please—
Not have to tease

St. Peter to let me go or stay,
But be at liberty to play

With old scouts here,
Most of the year.

And when you give a third,
Just take my word,

I'll be there,
On the square!

I'll hear the chimes,
As in other times,

The tumult in the hall,
When you the Master call—

Yes, I'll be there—
(Just leave a vacant chair)

And after lodge the eats,
The stories and the treats.

I may be entertained quite unawares,
When you ascend the stairs,

And watch you when you vote—
Or ride the goat.

I'll be watching every step you take,
(Don't make a break)

When the Star has a meal,
Don't steal

Away in pairs,
Down the stairs

Or to one corner of the hall,
And, if you do, don't call

Too loudly. Talk gently to your dears.
(For walls have ears)

And when I shuffle off,
Question not, nor scoff,

Just think of me
Put out to sea.

The voyage may be rough—
I may meet with rebuff;

The old sea-captain may gruffly say,
"Sir, you cannot sail today!"

He may look my passage o'er,
And leave me stranded on the shore,

So if you hear my voice when wild winds screech,
Just sorta wait for me along the beach.

Don't hang black crepe above the Master's chair—
(I care)

I like the white much better—
Or none at all—around the letter

"G" a band of white,
Left there, say, one lodge night,

Would suit me best;
And in the West,

Above the column broken,
Hang something as a token—

A simple wreath—Acasia sprigs will do—
And mingled with the green, a rose or two.

We do not stop to think that when we die,
The undiscovered country may not lie

So far away.
Say!

I sometimes think it may be here.
'Tis queer!

We often have an inkling
Of the Great Beyond; the tinkling

Of a bell
Will sometimes tell;

The God of day
Will drive away

The fog and damp and dark,
Then we hear the first notes of the lark,

As the light of the morning rushes on,
The night is gone

And drives from my enchanted heart
The mists away. We loathe to part

With friends,
But Nature sends

An echo from the great Beyond—
A glimpse, a hope so fond,

A note so clear
That we sometimes hear

Whisperings from the Great White Throne,
When we're alone!

REFLECTION

Although my way so far from home,
O'er Life's rough, rugged path I wend,
Wherever I may chance to roam,
I always seem to make a friend.



If I remember right, she said I was a dirty cuss;
And said, I'd hung some wrong side up to look conspicuous.

WIFE AND I ON WASH-DAY

Take it any day but wash-day, Wife is sort of decent-like,
She can cook as good a meal as any woman on the pike.
She can bake the finest bread and the choicest frosted cake,
And the pies she bakes are 'bout as good as Mother used
to make.

Yes, she's sort of Christian-like, and honest to the core—
But, the Wife and I do not agree—on wash-day—any
more!

Wife is very business-like, oft helps me, out-of-doors.

'Tis a common thing to see her out a-rustling up the
chores.

On market-days, the eggs are packed the night before. But,
say,

When she gets mad, I tell you what! she's in the ring
to stay.

I wouldn't tell the neighbors. But, last wash-day, she kinda
swore!

So, we are not on speaking terms—that is, on wash-day
—any more.

Last Monday was our wash-day, and the weather was just right.

The clothes were not so very black, but I worked with all my might.

I says, "Now, Wife, when we get through, we'll take a trip to town."

And it wasn't quite a minute, 'fore she called me a big clown.

I'd forgot to rinse a garment, which made her awful sore.

So, the Wife and I are far from friends—on wash-day—any more.

Our wash-day is a nuisance in a mere domestic way;

But, it sort of comes in handy; for, sometimes, we've much to say.

She tells me all my many faults, my misgivings, so to speak, And has 'em on her tongue's end, too, there stored up for a week.

And I tell her diverse things too; for, she said I was a bore. So, we never count on being friends—on wash-day—any more.

One time, I tried to favor her by hanging up the clothes.

Someway, somehow, I do not know. We nearly came to blows.

If I remember right, she said I was a dirty cuss;

And said, I'd hung some wrong side up to look conspicuous.

I'm glad I do not have to wash when on the other shore!

For, Wife and I now barely speak—on wash-day—any more.

I've often sat and wondered, if others fared the same as me,

Or, if, perchance, it is confined just to our family tree.

But, of one thing I am certain! Of the others that I meet, I can see much of the bitter that is mingled with the sweet.

Me and Wife have paddled long together and have settled many a score.

But, clouds don't have no silver linin'—on our wash-day—any more.

TO MOTHER

Mother! Swiftly the years have come and gone,
And I have sent no tribute unto thee;
The mystic years move on incessantly,
The waves of time are ever rolling on!

Each varied year doth flash a brighter ray,
Which lights anew my youth and childhood dreams;
How short the vanished years! To me it seems
I just behold the breaking of life's day.

I'll not forget the boyish sports and scenes,
Each year hath stamped their impress deeper there—
The lapse of time but makes them grow more fair,
Since I have grown to know what manhood means.

I fain would sit beside your hearth tonight,
And spend long hours in talk of olden times;
Perchance my thoughts would show themselves in rhymes,
And we might muse until the morning light.

Mother, those days I spent with you, are dear
And growing dearer every passing year.
What inspiration and what hopes appear,
When I glance backward, and with joy reflect!

I would be with you, where your bright smile shines,
And feel the glory of your presence bright!
I would be with you 'round your board tonight,
As in the blissful days of other times.

Yes! I would weave a wreath of sweetest flowers,
And crown your brow, around your silvered hair,—
And pin it with a hundred kisses there,
We would not note the passing of the hours.

Oh, may long years be yet in store for you,
And sweet contentment beam upon your brow,
To bless you to the end, as it does now,
Thus may your life be guided safely through.

May Angel-hands, those who in days of yore
Were near and dear to you, whose very lives
Were made a part of yours—while life survives
May they still cheer you from the other shore!

O, Mother, when you cease this fleeting breath,
Will you come back and soothe my fevered brow,—
And counsel me and cheer—as you do now—
And whisper in my ear, “There is no Death?”

Dear Mother, I could never half explore
With my poor muse, my depths of love for you!
But in the future, may I show more true
Devotion than I’ve ever shown before!

THE MOON

’Mid yonder azure skies, so deep and blue,
The Queen of Night is riding proudly on—
Reflecting from her lofty realm upon
This world of ours—just as if she knew

Her mighty force exerted on this sphere,—
So even there she seems to sit and ride,
And plough the dark, dense rolling clouds, and glide
Along the mountain peaks, serene and clear.

If ’twere not for her strong magnetic force,
The ocean would be tideless, and the night
Would be a dark and dreary baneful blight,
If she should change the pathway of her course.

Oh sweet, pale Moon, I love to watch you glide,
As on through heavenly spheres you push your way;
Among the stars in glorious array,
How gracefully o’er mountain-tops you stride—

And then plunge in a reef clear out of sight!
Then scud across the sky, as in a race;
I love to watch your even poise and grace,
And hail thy coming yet, Queen of the Night!

PETERSON

(Acrostic)

P-retty little town among the hills,
E-very one you meet seems like a friend.
T-o the south the streamlet with its rills
E-nriched by autumnal colors blend.
R-adiant the south hill in the golden fall
S-afely we dwell—in harmony we stand;
O-bedient to law, and to the Master's call
N-ature is ever here at our command!

April 13, 1924

SEA-MOODS

I've seen the mighty ocean fret and foam
And cast its maddened waves upon the shore.
I've heard at night, beside my cottage door,
Its thunderous threats to dash my little home
Upon the cruel rocks, then, like a child
Delirious—but peaceful for a spell,
Wake with a sudden sound, its story tell
In muttered tones, then, screeching long and wild,
Sob to itself—then, seemingly, to sleep—
But wake again—the same rebellious tones
Resound while winds the long night-vigils keep,
All interspersed with slumber and with moans
Till a messenger, the god of day, doth peep
Above the horizon—and the past condones.

REVERIES OF THE PAST

My thoughts were in childhood
An hour, last night;
The birds were all singing
With greatest delight.

The little old rose-bush
And stately old pine
Seemed dear to my heart,
For they used to be mine.

That stately old poplar
That shaded the lane
Has since been removed
And will ne'er come again.

The path we once trod
On the way to the 'crick'
No more can be seen—
Apple-trees are so thick.

What's caused the commotion
Since I've been away?
Everything is so different
I scarcely can stay.

The house is so changed;
They have painted it red.
Where stood the log pig-pen
Is a frame one instead.

Not pictures of childhood—
The scenes are so new;
I can't see the wildwood—
It has gone from my view.

How I miss the old log-shed
Where we boys romped in glee!
And that old pine so stately—
That dear cherished tree!

I shall never forget
The swing we had there.
Oh, wasn't it fine
To be swung in the air?

But while I am telling
Of our pleasures while boys,
Of play-house and swing
And long-cast-off toys,

How I long to be back
Where my heart beats at ease,
In the home of my childhood;
None else can so please.

DR. C. F. TAYLOR
(Acrostic)

C-haracter's stamped on every line you write;
F-earless you are, as Daniel in the den.
T-irelessly you for the Doctor always fight—
A brave defender of the rights of men,
Y-earning each day to do a noble deed.
L-iving the noble life, without a creed;
O-bedient, loyal, doing the best you can,
R-espected, unassuming friend of man!

NOTE—Doctor Taylor was founder and editor of *The Medical World* from 1883 to November, 1919. I have been a subscriber from the time of graduation, 1904, to the present.

October 1, 1919

MY BOOKS

Each book is my good friend;
Someway, somehow, they lend
To me enchantment—yet,
Many I have not met
Of those who wrote the same—
But I cherish still each name,
And feel I know them well,
And can a story tell
Of their whole lives. It seems
They haunt me in my dreams,
And I commune with them,
And they with me. And when
The days seem dark and drear,
They seem to linger near,
And, e'er I know, I turn
To passages that burn
Within my very soul.
'Tis then I see the goal
For which they strove. Though dead
In flesh, they live in books,
In babbling streams and brooks,
And joy springs up, and ere
I know, all things are fair.
The master-minds live on—
Only the shell is gone.
The things for which they strove
They left behind. They rove
In fields Elysian now.
I see upon each brow
A crown of immortelles fair—
Now they have blossomed there,
And shedding fragrance still,
As in bygone days, they fill
Our lives with perfume sweet.
In some good times, we'll greet
Them in their resting-place
Then we'll meet face to face!

INSPIRATION—A SILENT FRIEND

It speaks to my soul in the depths of the night,
And illumines my path through the day,
Its influence stealing o'er my sense of feeling
Till I yield to its magical sway.

It comes to me oft from the clasp of a hand,
From the glance of a stranger's eye,
And I cannot find rest till my mystical guest
Has told me the reason why.

It follows me closely, all through my life,
Wherever my footsteps may wend.
I cannot explain it, I cannot restrain it,
But can say 'tis a dear old friend.

It comes to me oft in a gentle touch,
Or a whisper, by way of a sign,
And I seem to be blessed, and, at times, caressed
By this silent, dear friend of mine.

Sometimes it comes like a mild gentle breeze,
Or through clouds where the sunlight is peeping;
I always can tell, for I feel its sweet spell,
Which comes over me, silently creeping.

But hark! 'Tis a whisper that speaks in my ear,
Its presence can never deceive me;
I welcome its words like the song of the birds
Whose musical notes oft relieve me.

MASONRY

(Acrostic)

M-emory of thee is what I most desire,
 A-sending thy fair summit day by day—
 S-ounding the call of "Brotherhood to Man,"
 O-nward to light, advancing in the way;
 N-ever withholding a kindly helpful hand—
 R-elief, thy motto—Truth and Right, thy stand,
 Y-es! thrice-welcome, thou, in every land!

SOMEWHERE OUT THERE

Somewhere at the front he is—somewhere Out There;
 He answered his country's call that day, you know.
 He's away, on land or sea, to do and dare,
 Somewhere—he didn't know just where he must go,—
 Somewhere Out There.

A victory will be won, somewhere Out There.
 Somewhere my blue-eyed Boy, my Dear, my Love
 Is carrying on, bravely doing his share.
 God, with eternal love, watch him from heaven above,
 Somewhere Out There.

'Neath God's all-seeing eye, somewhere Out There,
 A brave heart beats, with courage true alight;
 Dauntless through battle's roar and star-shell's glare.
 Knowing he's in the right, there's one who will gladly fight,
 Somewhere Out There.

The boy of my heart fights on, somewhere Out There,
 That right may still prevail, and men be free.
 Through days of conflict fierce, this is my prayer:
 O bring him back to me, when comes the victory,
 Somewhere Out There!

June 25, 1917

TO MY WIFE

(Sonnet)

My thoughts, dear wife, turn back to days gone by,
When each without the other seemed alone.
I loved the light which in your blue eyes shone,
Reflecting Heaven's face. Oft did I try
To tune my harp to sing the strains of love—
Impulsive strains which burst forth from the heart,
The love I could not then—nor now—impart—
The love I bear for you. It soars above
The muse's height, on strong and radiant wings.
This love makes bright my path, new pleasure brings,
Remembered joys its melodies outpour.
And although I, with loving, lingering gaze,
Review the last, the dear old happy days,
I can but say, today, I love you more.

WHEN I PASS ON

When I pass on I should just like to know
What folks will say. If my old friends will go
To where I repose, and if they will sigh,
Or shed a tear,—or will eyes be dry;
Or will they sit and think of me
As one who recently put out to sea?
Will they watch for me with lingering gaze,
And think they see me in misty haze,
Will they think of me when wild winds screech,
And sort of wait for me along the beach?
Sometimes when the full moon is bright and clear
Will someone say, “I wish he was here,
That we might sit musing of other times.
Our thoughts, perchance, might appear in rhymes!”
When I pass on I should just like to stride
Across the lawns at the eventide,
And linger, unseen, where old friends stray
And sort of listen to what they say.
Then I would steal across meadows sweet
And mingle with birds, and with swift feet
Would go, for at least one summer’s day,
Where I used, years ago, to romp and play.
I would tread the paths I knew as a boy,
And know once more their sorrow and joy.
When winter winds blow bleak and chill,
And the mad storm rages upon the hill,
And wife and bairns sit up in wait,
And our old watch-dog barks at the gate,
Would I then be welcome, could I but see
The children that played upon my knee,
And watch them romp and play on the floor,
And guard and guide as in days of yore?
The world will still move when I pass on,
But will they miss me when I am gone?



FRANCES LOVON NASH
Feb. 2, 1917—Dec. 3, 1919

TO MY ABSENT VALENTINE

(To my little girl aged 3 who lives beyond the border-line)

I fain would see you tonight dear, beyond the sun-lit skies,
Away up in the heaven's blue, with its glint in your lovely
eyes—

The Angels would lead me to where you dwell, and leave us
a while alone,

With no one to watch us there dear—save the One who's
above the throne!

If I could go to see you dear—I would leave you nevermore—
I'd bid farewell to the scenes below, to embark on that golden
shore.

I fain would see you tonight dear, so watch at the golden
gate—

I'll try my best to be your guest,—if only you'll watch and
wait.

I'll send you a radio message love, away to the farthest sphere
Perhaps some Angel who's tuning in, will gather the message
clear,

And bear it to you in that lovely place, to tell of my tender
love,

That burns for you as warm and true, as before you went
above.

ALWAYS BE KIND

Always be kind; don't fret and complain
And make your own misery and strife—
Nor talk of your neighbor with utter disdain,
Because he so joyfully sings the refrain:
"I am sure that I have the best wife!"

Yes, be kind, I say, for there'll come a day
When you'll wish you'd been kinder and truer.
Our friends cannot stay with us here always,
So let's cheer them and help them a bit while we may—
'Twill make our course safer and surer!

If you're always kind I know you will find
That true love will rule better than fear.
Kind words and kind deeds forever will bind
True hearts together, and not leave behind
A sign of a frown or a tear.

'Tis pleasanter, far, to speak a kind word,
And to greet all your friends with a smile;
And if you believe everything that is heard
And let your heart with sadness be stirred,
You'll be in distress all the while!

Kind words and kind deeds will never grow old;
They cheer and give strength to the mind,
They lessen life's burdens a full hundredfold.
So live that when you are gone 'twill be told:
"I know that he always was kind!"

TO HENRY FIELD

(After attending a radio concert given by Mr. Henry Field
and family and old-time fiddlers of Shenandoah,
Iowa, received at the home of the Rev-
erend Mr. Whitford, in Peterson,
Iowa, Nov. 6, 1923.)

Say, Henry Field,
Ye certainly yield

A salubrious voice over the radio,
By Joe!

We listened t' ye tonite,
Ef my ol' top was right,

From 9 t' 10:36 P. M. Say, Hen,
When'll ye come ag'in?

(Er does yer wife call ye Hank?)
We certainly thank

Ye fer the stuff ye put on,
Thanks t' Hope, Josephine and John

Henry. (Why not Henry John?)
And 'pon my word!

I thot I heard
Little Ruth pipin' in.

Better all come ag'in—
And do a little more talkin'

Yourself. I aint a'-balkin'.
As stated above,

We're all in love
With yer salubrious voice.

The women seemed t' take a choice
At onst, when they heard you,

Whew!
And every little while

We cud almost see ye smile
When ye'd read the names ye got

'Bout them telegrams, we sot
There, sort of perplexed—

Wonderin' what was comin' next!
I declare

Ef Philip had bin there
Frum Simpson College, he'd a bin princin'

To be in the dancin'—
I never, in all my life,
Talked so plain t' my wife

T' keep still in company,
But, gee—
She wuz fidgity!

She told me, when we got home,
While I wuz makin' up this pome,

She never come so near, before,
Shakin' her Presbyterian foot on that floor!

Ye see we wus at the Methodist preacher's—
He'd invited us and some teachers;

Sed there'd be some fiddlin'
And a middlin'

Good all-around time—
T' come at nine.

Sure enuf, ye did show
Up, and rarin' t' go!

We could hear the shouts like a Methodist Camp
Meetin'
And some 'un beatin'

Time—and do ye know,
Our Joe

Growed some punkins frum seed frum you,
So we had some punkin pie, too,

And coffee and—a reg'lar snack,
A crackerjack!

The feller that done the tunin' in
'Ould grin

And sort uv raise his hand
Ez a command
Fer us t' keep still—

That wuz each time when
Ye wus about t' talk, Hen.

And a boy in th' crowd
Seemed t' be talkin' loud

'Bout yer girls.
Hev they bobbed hair—or curls?

He's sort of stuck on them, and 'ju know I
Think he'll take a trip t' Shenandoah!

Well, so long, Hen,
Come ag'in!

TO BILL

I s'pose you still remember, Bill,
When you and I were young,
A-playin' 'neath the old sand-hill
And swimmin' in the sun.

And oh, that day we went to school,
Our lessons all unlearned,
Old Topp made music with the rule,
And gee whizz, how it burned!

I'll not forget that time, I know,
That you and I and Dick,
Went marching to the village store,
And came home awful sick.

You know, we bought a plug to chew,
Some fine-cut and a pipe;
I never since have felt so blue,
Say, mister, it was ripe!

I'll not forget the time that you
And I began to fight;
I'm sure we made the air turn blue,
With language used that night.

Such thinks were common then to us,
And scarce a day went by;
Some youngster didn't raise a fuss,
Or get a good black eye.

Yes, boys are boys, the old men say,
I think that we've been there;
I'll not forget that glad, bright day,
That we went on a tear.

You know, we tired of our work,
Of parsing and of spellin's,
And oftentimes did our minds lurk
About some patch of melons,—

Which grew on vines so thick and fast
That you and I would plan
That we would tackle Taylor's patch,
Which often did we scan.

We hurried to the place full chase,
Oh, yes,—we fairly flew!
You out with knife, and double quick,
You cut the thing in two.

And to our eyes what sad surprise!
(For naught was I a felon)
I slammed it down and said, “You clown,
That’s a citron; not a melon!”

But what a mighty change since then,
How old the boys have grown;
We since have grown to stalwart men,
To different states have flown.

Glad memories lurk within my breast,
And cheer my soul to know,
We found true joys in our quest
In days of long ago.

A SONNET

(To Keats)

Sadly, tho sweetly, do I think of thee,
Long-honored bard. Each muse was thy proud friend;
The nymphs came from the sylvan shades to blend
The rhyme of spirits with thy minstrelsy!
Thy music poured forth, golden, glad and free,
In harmonies that ne’er shall know an end
But shall fore’er in loveliness transcend
The songs that charm with lesser wizardry.
Cupid and Psyche thou dost make appear,
Flowers of Narcissus Cynthia’s bow hide;
To meadows fair, and silver streamlets clear,
Comes Pegasus, the steed thy hand didst guide.
Aurora smiles, and Orpheus is here;
Endymion and Thou sleep side-by-side!

LINES IN AN ALBUM

May you get a good husband,
And be a good wife,
And live with contentment
The rest of your life!

THE PRAIRIE

There 'neath a smiling dome,
Flora has found her home,
Silent and sweet;
There gentle zephyrs blow
And spring skies softly glow—
With charm replete.

Brightly the sunlight shines,
All Nature's work combines
To form the scene.
I fain would muse with her—
Lessons peruse with her
From morn till e'en.

Beauty and thought lie there,
Dreams, and knowledge rare,
If we but knew!
Before the day's begun
And morning's radiant sun
Drinks up the dew.

There would I court the Muse,
There would my mind peruse
Subjects supreme.
Come, sweet blossoming plain,
That doth my heart enchain,
Tell me your theme!

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY BANQUET

Ye seniors will be guests I pray,
At a party on St. Patrick's Day,—

At 8 p. m. and not until
At J. J. Merwin's on the hill.

I'm after now invitin' ye,
And green with envy ye will be,
If ye don't come as I have stated,
And in the parlor there be sated.

PS—

In case ye shouldn't git this letter
Plaze let me know, so I'll know better.

Invitations to Seniors of High School, 1923

THE SLAVE

Oh, shame, man who might be of worth,
To barter all for paltry pelf,
To satisfy your greedy self
By robbing lowly sons of earth!

To see them toil from day to day,
Amid the luxuries of your wealth,
Without a thought of love, or health,
Without a dream or thought of play!

How can you sleep amid such wrong,
To keep them in so low a sphere—
While passing through their few years here,
When want and aid is all their song.

From out your paltry pomp and show,
You cannot spare one single cent;
You seem to have no good intent,
You care not how the winds may blow—

Your only aim is gain and gain—
You care not for the toiling poor,
Care only that your own's secure,
And thus content, you sit and reign.

Oh rich man living at your ease,
What will the future have in store—
When you are ushered to that shore,
Where you can gather no more fees!

Think you that going to your church,
And paying for a high priced pew;
With all the country lauding you,
Will raise you from your lofty perch,

And place you by the throne of God?
When you have been so mean and low,
To rob your fellow-man and know,
That you have sent him 'neath the sod—

Long ere his earthly course had run!
I pray reflect ere 'tis too late,
Before your Maker shuts the gate
And strikes your guilty conscience dumb.

If such base acts can be atoned,
When you have passed the Great Beyond;
You money-grabber who has fawned
To count your money interest-loaned,

I pray that this will not erase
The record of your miser care—
If I find so when I get there,
I fain would take the other place.

DO AND DARE

Dare to be true to your highest aims,
No matter what people may think;
This world is full of the easy class
Who loiter along life's brink.
Do with a will whatever you do,
The burdens of life grow sweet.
Just a helping hand, or a hint of praise
Oft fills us with joy complete.

Dare to refrain from the bitter cup
Tinctured with vileness and sin!
Your honor is gone, and your self-respect,
If ever you drink it in.
Do, or perish, if in the right,
Rise up to your proudest aim;
For cheap contempt for your action fine
Will never sully your fame.

Dare for the truth—it will make you free,
No matter where it is found;
The weight of the truth is ever the same
On Christian and heathen ground.
Repine not over what's past recall,
But live that your deeds may show;
Upspring in your might from every fall,
And rally from every blow.

Dare to be true to a stranger friend—
'Tis part of man's mission in life;
Each hour that a helping hand you lend
Will lessen the pending strife.
Do not despair if the world seems cold,
Nor mourn with a selfish distress;
Centre the mind, a rich purpose find—
'Twill comfort and help and bless.

Dare to be ready to face the fray
Of vice and hatred and wrong,
'Twill make you blest in a future day,
For true love will still reign on.
Do and dare to strive for your aim,
But ever be just and true;
Trust not to the chance of fortune's hand,
Which may never come to you.

WATSON CREEK

There is a stream that ever flows,
A bright and sparkling wave;
As to its source, no person knows—
It gushes from a cave.

When summer comes with sultry heat,
And all the wells are low,
We still can find a cool retreat,
When to the spring we go.

And often, through the summer-time,
When farmers want an outing;
They gather up their hook and line,
For Watson Creek, a-trouting.

Let winter come with frost and snow,
Or spring with buds and flowers;
Come, let the sultry breezes blow,
We'll spend the happy hours

Down by the banks of Watson Creek,
Where everything looks gay;
Where cattle roam, so nice and sleek,
And lovers love to stray.

Where cooling breezes ever blow,
Where flowers bloom, and blithe birds sing;
Where ceaselessly the waters flow;
Where summer is perpetual spring.

NOTE—This spring is near Wykoff, Minn., where my wife went to school as a girl. The school is fifteen rods from the mouth of the cave and source of the creek.



They drove away with him, around the bend. . .

MY SOLDIER BOY

My soldier boy went off, one tragic day,
 They called him to the front and to the fray.
 Before he left, he said, "Now, Mother dear,
 I'm going to the front, but don't you fear;
 I'll send you word as often as I can—
 I'll do my best, always, to act the man!"
 He bore up bravely, yet, I heard a sigh
 The while he murmured low his last goodbye.
 They drove away with him, around the bend. . .
 I said, "My God! I've lost my dearest friend!"
 For he was gone, ah, where, I did not know,
 And how it wrenched my heart to see him go!
 He had to go; the country is in need
 Of men like him, so Mothers' hearts must bleed.
 The country must be saved—young men be lost,
 And we in grief and pain must pay the cost.
 Now he is gone. . . I knew that he would go:
 "Each one," he said, "must do his bit, you know."

I now recall ('twas when he was a boy)
A day when he was busy with some toy.
I saw him marching swiftly through the yard,
And as he strode, he said, "I'll hit 'em hard!"
I wondered what he meant, but now I see
That he assumed an air of chivalry!
Soon after this, he teased me for a drum,
And then a fife. Still I can hear him hum
Those patriotic airs—can see him stand
And wave a stick, while giving sharp command!
I little dreamed that there would come a day
When he would take his gun and march away. . .
Now he is gone. . . I knew that he would go:
"Each one," he said, "must do his bit, you know."

The other night (I saw him, plain as day)
He laughed and talked his well-remembered way;
He strode into the house, "O Jack," I said,
"'Tis you, my Jack! I dreamed that you were dead!"
"Oh, no," said he, "I'm still alive and well,
But just the other day, a bursting shell
Just grazed my breast, and knocked my helmet off;
I'll tell you what, it made me gasp and cough!
And everything turned black; I lost my breath;
A comrade near, said, 'It's another death. . .'
It chilled me to the bone, but made me mad,
And then I waded in again, like Dad
Did in the Civil War. I'm home a week,"
He said, "Now, Mother, let's play hide-and-seek,
And bake some good old pies and cakes, you know,
And have some fun, before I have to go!
Our forces soon again will be attacked,
And I may do some great heroic act!
You see, dear Mother, fate has willed it so.
Each one," he said, "must do his bit, you know."

And, though 'twas all a dream, it seemed so real
That now, today, it seems to me I feel
His presence here. Can it be, he is dead?
Today, I read some fearful news. It said,
"Some thirty thousand lost! The slaughter waged
Far into the night, and as the battle raged,
One gallant boy, quickly, with desperate nerve,
Caught up the Stars and Stripes, nor did he swerve,
But, pressing on, he bore the battle's brunt
Till that old flag was waving at the front!

The day was won; ten thousand cheers arose,
Then they, at dawn, pursued their vanquished foes.
The cannon-balls were flying thick and fast,
With shrapnel bursting all around. The blast
Was like the mouth of hell," (the paper said)
"And lying six feet deep, were dying and dead."
That gallant boy! I wish I knew his name!
Could it be Jack who's earned such deathless fame,
Or will he come to cheer me, as of old?
Things seem so strange. I feel so numb and cold. . .
It seems that he has been so long away—
(He has not written me for many a day)
Perhaps he did that gallant act. If so,
I'm sure that he has done his bit, you know.

Perhaps some officer with kindly eyes,
Will meet my son, and to his glad surprise
Will form a friendship with him. He's so true!
His soul shines out from eyes so deep and blue.
If they should ever look within his coat,
They'd find a little message that I wrote
The night before he left—and to be sure
That it was safe, I pinned it, quite secure,

And re-inforced it with a stitch, they'll see
It in the inside pocket. "Think of me,
Your Mother dear," I wrote with trembling hand,
"I hope they're kind to you in that strange land."
If they but see the locket he put there,
(Which has my picture and a lock of hair,
My name and my address) they'll send him home.
If he were here, I'd beg him not to roam
Again to distant climes and over seas,
But still, I know, he'd say such words as these,
"Off to the front today I'll have to go;
Each Mother's son must do his bit, you know."

Now he is gone, I've time to think of when
I locked him in the cellar; kissed him then
When he came up (he's now in a trench) and once,
I struck him hard, calling my boy a dunce!
And once he slept three nights upon a bench.
To think, Oh, God, tonight he's in a trench!

He may be wounded, dead, or breathing fast,
Shrieking with pain, or freezing in the blast!
Could I but hold him close and kiss his brow,
I think love's peace would save him, even now.
Could I but soothe him, ere the fleeting breath
Had passed, and hear him say, "There is no death!"
Could I but keep with him his last long hours,
I'd weave all in a wreath, his favorite flowers
And crown his brow, sunny with yellow hair—
And fasten it with myriad kisses there!
But he is gone. . . "Each one," he said, "must go—
Each Mother's son must do his bit, you know."

April 12, 1917

INSPIRING THOUGHT

Come, inspiring thought, and thrill me,
Tune my harp and let me sing;
Roll away the stone of bondage,
Loudly let the anthems ring.

Bear an echo from the soul-realm
To my yearning mind tonight;
Fill me with deep inspiration,
Mould my thoughts—renew my sight.

Gladly do I wait thy coming,
Dark and cheerless seems the way;
Robbed of thee and thy wise counsel,
No sweet pleasures round me play.

Welcome are thy ministrations;
Tune my heart to something new.
Ever welcome are thy precepts,
Loving, tender, kind and true.

Truly thought should find an echo
In a heart attuned to thine;
And my love should cast reflection
Where your presence is to shine.

February, 1901

LENORA

Oft when the toil of the day is o'er and I
Perchance sit musing in a pensive way,
Comes flooding to my mind incessantly
Remembrances of by-gone days—and these
The lapse of years seems not to mar or fade,
And still I view them in their loveliness.
They stand serene in sweet tranquility;
I drink their fragrance in, as when a boy.

Yet oft amid the busy scenes of life
I pause a while—am lost in sober thought,
I ponder and reflect, and from within
The beating of my heart goes wildly on.
What does it mean—why should it seem so strange?
Ah! There she stands, she always comes to me!

Those lovely eyes inspire me as of old,
And take me back to boyhood days and mirth,
When life was fraught with joy, and daily toil
Brought fresh encouragements, and no regrets.
Yes! I can see them yet, they do not fade,
But as a beacon on a winter's night
Shines brighter as we view it from afar;
So, as the years speed by—methinks I see
An added lustre to those sparkling eyes.

I see her as of yore—with sunny curls
(She was a lovely girl) her winning ways
Seemed but to find an anchor in my heart;
And held her there, and time will not erase,
Or make me grow forgetful of her charm.
I see her now; a smile lights up her face
But she seems sad—and as I closer look,
She drops into a quiet peaceful sleep.

Her face grows pale. Ah! 'Tis the self-same scene,
It takes me back some twenty years ago,
Though I recall the scene reluctantly—
When all my hopes were blasted in an hour,
And I was thrown upon a selfish world;
My prospects all had vanished, and my hopes
Were scattered to the winds—for ruthless death
Had chosen my well-beloved—I see her yet
Those love-lit eyes—that longing lasting look
Grappling with death and all futurity.
Her hands grew cold, her gentle heart was hushed—
Hushed. . . and yet I feel its throb today—
And feel her presence as I did of yore.

I also see that cold and cheerless day
Assembled friends had come from far and near
And I can hear those farewell obsequies;
But ever and anon—her charming face
Still shines throughout the years, and I can see
Her form that's robed in Immortality.
And now methinks I see a curtain part,
And in the background stands a well known form
It is my lost Lenora! I recall
(It seems as if it were but yesterday)
When with her parting breath, a whisper came,
"I will not go away, I'll be with you."
And she is here, I feel her presence dear.

She is a welcome guest, for oftentimes
The world seems cold, and I am left alone,
I feel her presence as a gentle breeze—
And often when the day is hushed to rest
And twilight's mist enfolds us and the night
Comes stealing softly on—I sit and muse;—
'Tis then I feel the instincts of the soul,

And as an echo from the Borderland,—
She whispers as of old, "I'll be with you."
Yes, she is here, she told me she would come
And I have felt her presence all these years
Oh, oftentimes the storm and stress of life
Comes flooding in, but yet my heart is strong,—
'Tis then I feel a touch upon my brow,
And though the day be calm, a gentle breeze
Starts up, and blows my doubts and fears away
And makes me feel forgetful of my cares;
No matter how the clouds of fate arise,
The sunshine of the past will shine between,
And they are drifted to a distant clime,
Leaving my sky of hope serene and calm.

I am content with life—for well I know
My love is here—that she has kept her word!

To T. C. BUXTON, M. D.

Well brother B— you ask of me,
To write you up a sonnet;
I do declare, it isn't fair,
My mind was not upon it.

I spend spare time, in rustic rhyme,
Or pen a stray epistle;
Fond memories bring—my muse to sing
Others lead it to a whistle!

Yes! I can try—but I can't fly,
My muse perhaps would wonder;
So do not ask my muse the task
Of mixing with a blunder!

THAT BIG-BELLIED MUSCLE!

“How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view,”
Just how we all tried to keep pa in a mild-mood
So we wouldn’t feel the sharp toe of his shoe.
The jokes that we played, I recall them a-plenty
And I still can recall the price that we paid;
And I’ll never forget when I turned one-and-twenty,
When I told him I guessed he was laid in the shade.
I suggested we have just a short friendly tussle
And father was ready as quick as a scat,
He brought into play that time-hardened muscle,
And soon I was layin’ right flat on the mat.
That big-bellied muscle
Soon ended the tussle,
That big-bellied muscle
Pure muscle, not fat!

And then I asked father to spar for a minute,
He responded in haste with a tap to my snout;
I saw at a glance I weren’t goin’ to be in it,
’Twas a matter of time I’d be counted plumb out!
So I sent a swift blow to the great Solar Plexus,
Dad warded it off with a jab to my jaw;
He was harder to land than a steer down in Texas
So I gave it all up with the victor as Pa.
That big-bellied muscle
Soon ended the tussle,
That big-bellied muscle
As firm as the law!

One time, we attended a sort of a prize-meet,
A professor was showin’ us the art of defense;
One by one he knocked them clean off of their feet
I could see that it tickled my father immense!

“To the man who will stay just one round,” he said slyly,
“Ten dollars I’ll give,” then his mustache he’d curl.
Just then I nudged father, who said rather dryly
“Well sir, I believe I will try you a whirl.”
Pa mounted the ringside as he peeled off his coat,
And our Prof made a rush at the sound of the bell;
I thought sure as fate he would get father’s goat,
’Till that big-bellied muscle got workin’ right well.

Pa landed a blow to the Prof’s cerebellum
A jab to the jaw, and a poke to his snout;
The Prof didn’t know just what had befell him
As he lay on the ropes and was counted clear out!
That big-bellied muscle
Soon ended the tussle,
And the Prof was bewailin’
The cash he was out!

Pa never was givin’ to boastin’ or blowin’
But he ‘allus’ was firm when he said yes, or no,
Pa ‘allus’ allowed us a half of a showin’
“Everyone” he would say, “has to hoe his own row!”
Now dad he has gotten quite aged and wrinkled,
The weight of his years are beginnin’ to show;
His form is somewhat bent, and his hair which was sprinkled
With dark and with grey, is as white as the snow.
He still chores around, and comes in purty handy,
And takes a man’s place in a pinch even now.
Any man of his age who excels him’s a dandy,
I believe right today, he would mix in a row.
He still has some muscle
To spare in a tussle,
That well seasoned muscle
Can follow the plough!

LIFE

A cry—a cradle—a toy,
A youngster full of fun;
A boat launched on the sea of life
'Mid tossing waves of joy and strife—
A journey just begun.

A man of thought and care
For toil he cannot flee.
See his brawny arm and hand,
How straight and stalwart does he stand,
How firm his step! But see. . .

A stooping form—a cane,
A tottering feeble gait,
A pair of specks, an easy chair,
A wrinkled brow, no teeth nor hair.
He hasn't long to wait.

And then a few sick days. . .
A tear, a heart yet brave;
A long procession in the street,
A hearse, a coffin, all complete,
A spirit-friend. . . a grave.

A MORNING THOUGHT

When the morning sun is shining,
And the clouds have drifted on;
And for naught we are repining
Pleasures coming, troubles gone.

When the breeze is softly blowing,
While we drink its fragrance in,—
And the cup of life is flowing,
And dreamed-of goals we win.

Then we love the charms of Nature,
And its pleasures that are given;
Who would want a richer treasure,
Who would ask a better heaven!

CONTENTMENT

The highest point of pleasure we attain
Is through a friend who's honest, kind and true,
And our brief lives would all be lived in vain
Did we not each our share of duty do.

A glittering store of wealth will not suffice
To pacify a mind that's discontent,
But sweet content will make us gracious, wise,
And through our days will all our joys augment.

The malcontents are always ill-at-ease,
Their nerves are all unsteady and unstrung;
Their motives may be good, yet they can't please
Their dearest friend, with the most fluent tongue.

The tiny chord which binds true friends together,
That helps them each to share the other's care,
That makes them friends through bright and
 gloomy weather,
Is but contentment in a plenteous share.

Had I the choice of riches, fame or power,
Or travels o'er the world, on pleasure bent,
I would not grasp it for a single hour—
Nor yet exchange with any with content.

Contentment dwells in every loyal breast,
In hearts that are pure and honest and contrite,
And we will serve the highest purpose best
When each is working for the others' right.

Life's river deepens as it onward flows,
And brings us speculations, hopes and fears,
But this is true, through all our weal and woes:
With discontent, come loneliness and tears.



A TALE

Once a tribe of Mowhawk Indians
Settled on a reservation,
There to hunt and live through winter;
There to gather round the camp-fire,
Smoke the Peace-pipe, tell big stories;
How they scalped the old-time pale-face—
Roamed the forest—searched for wild game,
How they fought with other “Injuns,”
Had their ponies swim the river.
How they managed in their shrewdness
To betray the foxy pale-face;
When and where they held their war-dance,
Made the forest ring with war whoops
While they chased the mammoth Grisly
Buffalo, fox and deer and bison.
How in early days they ventured
To the land of Minnesota,
Where the pale-face holds dominion,
Where the fields are full of produce,

Corn and oats and other good things.
How they traveled in the night time
Filled the wagons with the plunder,
Then retreated to the low-lands
Passed the night in eating, sleeping,
Till the Sun-God could direct them;
Then with muffled rigs and ponies,
Hied they to the land of pale-face—
There again to steal the apples,
Corn and chickens and the melons.
How they planned to have the night shine,
With the Moon they called “Cokeeses,”—
Aiding them o’er dangerous roadways,
Through the tangled netted forest,
To the pleasures of the wigwam,
Where the old Chief was in waiting.
Kettle filled with squirrel and rabbit,
And perchance a leg of venison.
Sated they their eager hunger
With the good things they had gathered.
Well to tell you of my story
All about this tribe of Mowhawks,
Hailing from old Chickamauga,
Where long years ago I met them;
Oh, ’twas cold, in dead of winter,
Snow was deep, we tired of travel.
Through this bleak and cheerless forest,
Roamed this tribe in search of venison,
Or perchance what they might capture,
With their numerous bows and arrows.
Passing once, through this drear country
With a friend, seeking adventure,
And to spend a brief vacation,
From the turmoil of the city,
From the clash and clang of business,

From our ever-present duties—
We, without a note of warning,
Were surrounded by the red-men.
We had thought our days were ended!
Tomahawk and bow and arrow,
Great big feathers in their turbans,
And a half a hundred war-whoops
Made us realize our danger.
Yet we had since early childhood,
Been familiar with the red men,
Knew their ways, and how to treat them,
And at once in their own language,
Said I all I could to save us—
Said I all I could in “Injun”—
“Nitchy shin, good Mowhawk,”
Meaning, “Friends, we’re glad to meet you.”
Then we reached into our baskets,
Took therefrom some food so tempting—
Motioned them to take and eat it.

Now we thought the danger over,
Thought we’d conquered them with kindness.
They in turn showed us their treasures,
And the game they’d caught since morning.
Oh, the chatter of these wild-men,
It was worse to us than Gaelic,
Sounded like so many Turkeys—
They could see we were not war-like.
But discussed long how we came there,
If perchance while journeying onward
Tracking up a deer or bison,
We had simply lost our way there.
Some appeared so wild and frantic,
Judging from their frenzied gestures,
Feared they, that we had been planning

To connive and do them damage,
By the aid of other pale-face,
Might invade their reservation,
Kill their squaws and their papooses,
Take away the deer and bison,
And their other scanty treasures.
Now the night was fast approaching,
And from out the gathering darkness,
We could hear the owl a-hooting,
And the Whip-poor-will a-calling.
All the fires were then rekindled,
Ready for the night a-coming.
Then I spoke to my companion—
Said we'd better journey onward
Ere the darkness grew upon us
As the wind was getting stronger,
And the day was growing colder.
We had better journey southward—
Till we reached the Mississippi
There to stay until the morning
With a friend of mine who dwelt there,
With a staunch old friend and school-chum,
Spend an hour around the fireside,
Talking of our long-past school-days.
So we thither turned our footsteps,
But the red-men all insisted
That we stay until the morning,
Till the Owl had quit his hooting,
Till the Whip-poor-will quit calling,—
Till the Sun-God could direct us—
So we stayed until the morning,
With a feeling quite uneasy.
We could hear this hum and chatter
Much beyond the time of midnight.

Morning came at last, and found us
Ready for our early journey—
But the red-men had been planning
All the night how they would lead us
Far into the reservation,
Far into the deepest forest,—
Where, if left alone, we'd wander,
Traveling always in a circle—
Nevermore to see our kindred.
So they made us journey with them—
Some would lead us, some would follow.
They had daubed on much of war-paint,
And they talked with much excitement.
We made every known entreaty,
But it seemed to goad them harder,
Seemed to make them more determined,
And they seemed to grow more frantic;
From their eyes the fire flashing.

We did not pretend to doubt them,
Danger stared us in our faces,
Death was stalking in the forest,
When the leader stopped and shouted,
Then the rest took up the war-whoop;
Soon we found we were surrounded
Tomahawk and bow and arrow
Held in readiness to pierce us,
Pointing at us with the arrows,
One big chief looked to the heavens—
As a sign to the Great Father
To have mercy on his children,
Ere the arrows left the quivers.
Desperation lurked within us;
As a last resort I hailed them,
With a hailing-sign distressing,

“Grand Hailing Sign,” is what they call it,
From an order I belonged to—
Ancient order of the Craftsman,
Given but in times of danger,
Times when life is in the balance,
Danger imminent and timely.
Several tribesmen dropped their hatchets,—
Shot their quivering arrows skyward,
Cleaned the paint from off their faces.
One big chief who acted spokesman
Held his hand up as a token—
Silence reigned upon the warriors,
No one even stirred a muscle.
Soon they held a consultation—
Council by but few attended,
It was very still and secret.
Now the prospect looked much brighter,
Things had changed as if by magic.
Some mysterious force was working—
Forces gathered with the ages—
Known to various tribes and peoples,
Something known by king and peasant
Known to only those who seek it,
Seek it and are found quite worthy.
Soon they journeyed with us southward,
Led us back to where we met them—
Showed us where we’d find the pale-face,
Much to their delight and ours.
Giving us a parting signal
Faded they into the forest.
Soon we reached the Mississippi—
We arrived at home that evening,
Tired out from our adventure,
By the jabber of the red-men,
And the many miles we traveled.

MY RETREAT

From my silent little attic,
Comes to me a peace ecstatic.
Here I find a joy complete,
Far above the city street.
In my cozy little room,
Far above the noise and gloom,
I spend some happy hours each day—
Hours of work and pleasant play;
Here I study, live and learn—
Reading subjects in their turn.
Here my mind is free from care,
In this pure ethereal air.
Here the notes of singing birds
Greet me as with pleasant words.
I can sit and gaze below,
Watching people come and go.
Sitting by my cheerful blaze,
I can muse of other days;
Here to me the muse disarms,
Pouring forth her richest charms.
Let the winter come with snow,
Let the angry north-winds blow,
I can while away the time
With a simple, rustic rhyme.
Here the poet's mystic dower
Comes to me with gracious power—
With a sense of joy serene,
Adding beauty to the scene.

I can sit and tune my lyre
To a note of something higher.
Every setting of the sun
Finds me here with something done.
Should you wish to be my guest,
I will give you of my best.
At eventide, just climb my stair—
You will find a welcome rare.
We can have a social chat,
Telling this—discussing that.
If, perchance, you take to rhyme,
We can spend an hour's time
Looking o'er my lyric lays
In a sort of backward gaze.
Here I let the fire burn bright
Till sweet fancies of the night
Come into my inner vision,
Bringing thoughts of the Elysian.
I am sitting here alone,
Musing in an undertone.
Hark! A note I know full well,
Coming from the city bell,
From the lofty Gothic tower,
Pealing forth the midnight hour.

NOTE—Written while a freshman at Medical College.

A QUESTION

“What makes your bref smell, Papa, so?”
Said little Lilly May.

“Sometimes it smell so bad, you know,
I turn my head away.

“The other day I asked Mamma,
If, when you were a child
You smoked a pipe like that, Papa?
She shook her head and smiled,—

And said, ‘He’d quit it if he would,
And can if he but tries
You see, his kisses don’t taste good
And smoke, it hurts my eyes.’

“So really now—don’t you believe
You’d think as much of me
If I would tell you just to leave
That smoke and bacca be?”

POINTED ADVICE

Now, friends, don’t forget what I’ve told you,
For people will say what they say;
If they fret and fume, and scold you,
Why, just let them blather away!

OUR COURTSHIP

You see, when Edwin courted me,
I had some others on the string,
Some three or four hung after me
And always teased to buy the ring.
I had some seven suitors, then,
But some were cowards, some were brave;
I didn't know just which to choose—
All, said they'd love me to the grave.
I suddenly was taken sick;
I called a doctor in our town—
A youthful doctor, trying hard,
To win a name and some renown.
He said 'twas smallpox that I had,
I'd have to stay in thirty days;
But somehow I was always glad
To have him call, and hear his praise.
You see, we all were quarantined
(And other suitors kept away)
The doctor was extremely nice,
And dropped in several times a day.
We all were kept in thirty days,
I couldn't even drop a line;
And there was Tom, and Joe, and John,
And Henry Jones, and Sammy Cline.
Some ten years later, Edwin said
'Twas just the chickenpox I had.
You see, he had to scheme a bit
To get ahead of Ma and Dad.
By the time the quarantine was spent
The young physician pressed his suit;
He somehow got my full consent
And also Pa and Ma's to boot.
He bought a ring and we were wed,
And Pa, he gave the bride away;
And many bitter tears were shed,
By suitors, on that wedding day.

NOTE—A Ladies' Society planned something unique in that each member was requested to respond with something pertaining to her married life. Mrs. Nash was given "Our Courtship" and I was persuaded to write out her answer in verse, which she read at the meeting.

SWEET MARIE

Oh! the springtime cheers my heart,
It bids all care and grief depart,
Since I've touched by Cupid's dart,
You will see—

I've a lassie I call mine,
And her cheeks are red as wine,
Say, but, mister, she is fine—
Sweet Marie.

When within my heart are pent
Gloomy thoughts and discontent,
When distress or wonderment
Come to me,

I will fly to one I know
Who will all care overthrow,
One to whom my joy I owe—
Sweet Marie!

Oh! her eyes are full of love,
Pure as light from heaven above,
She is spotless as a dove,
Fair to see,—

And her teeth are like a pearl,
When her rosy lips do curl,
Yes, she is my charming girl,
Sweet Marie!

How could I resist her charms
When she comes with outstretched arms?
Who would not shield from threatening harms,
Such as she?

She is modest, neat and prim,
And her love will never dim,
For she's free from every whim,
Sweet Marie.

Then one morning of last spring,—
How the birds did sweetly sing,
When my love I came to bring,
Here to be!

Yes, to live with, all my life,
Free from sorrow, care and strife,
To live with me—my charming wife,
Sweet Marie!

When the toil of day is o'er,
I, all my inmost thoughts outpour
To the lassie I adore,
As you see.

Who will give me joyous rest,
Who will make my whole life blest,
Who is it that I love best?
Sweet Marie!

A TRIBUTE

To the Memory of MRS. W. W. HUBBELL

Yes, she is gone—and it seems all so strange
That she should go—she was so active here;
But God has called her to a higher range,
A lovelier clime, to that Celestial sphere—
Where life ends not at death nor at the grave;
Her life was spent that others she might save.

In Christian Temperance work, and Sabbath School,
She labored hard, her hand was at the helm,—
Now we are left to stress the Golden Rule,
And banish all intemperance from earth's realm—
She, who was ever loyal, true and brave—
Others to save,—herself, she could not save.

She, whose life here, was spent in good pursuit,
Battling wrongs with all her might and main;
Will, as the years go by—bear richest fruit,
Nor will we know till we shall meet again—
But that her kindly presence greets us still,—
Beckoning us on, her mission to fulfill.

Year in, year out, no duty did she shirk,
No gathering was complete without her face;
We did not quite appreciate her work,
Till she was missed from her accustomed place.
Her time, her talents, and her life she gave,—
Others she saved,—herself, she could not save.

NOTE—The above poem was suggested by Reverend Mr. Healey's text at Mrs. Hubbell's funeral. Matthew 27:42—"He saved others, Himself he could not save."



MY CHOICE

MY CHOICE

You may talk of your Springtime—of buds and of flowers,
You may glory in Autumn when landscapes are gay,
Or Summertime, when, in the long golden hours,
You strolled with your love at the close of the day.

But give me old Winter, when bleak winds are blowing,
When the landscape is bare and no leaf on the tree,
Give me a snug fire when the night is a-going—
With the light burning low—and my girl on my knee.

Or give me old Winter, with its snow and its sleighing,
With the ringing of bells, and its high Christmas glee,
The meetings (protracted), the singing and praying,
And a ride from the church with my girl on my knee!

PRESCIENCE

I know some dear angel is near me,
To bless me and beckon me on;
Though unseen, its presence does cheer me,
And I'm lone when I think it is gone!

DEPARTED FRIENDS

We have friends who have passed to that home over yonder,
 Who have left us forlorn, in our sadness to roam;
 But should we continue in sorrow to ponder,
 When they are but waiting to welcome us home?

Our thoughts of the future should ever shine brightly,
 Since our friends who have gone, may often return;
 Those phantoms of death, may be treading so lightly
 The old habitation, where their hearts often yearn.

Hark! Gently from over the portals I hear them,
 My eyes are now closed to the pleasures of earth;
 Such solace it gives me to linger so near them,
 They are telling me now of their glorious new birth.

Oh—their heavenly music, I still hear it ringing,
 The scenes of their home are entrancingly fair;
 In time to the music I hear their sweet singing,
 And it tells me how glorious it is to be there.

Far over the housetops I see them ascending,
 Yet still I can hear their gladsome refrain;
 With sweetest of music their way they are wending,
 I beckon them back to these pleasures again.

They are gone, they are gone, but my pathway looks brighter,
 For bright is the road they are leaving behind;
 My blood will flow purer, my heart will beat lighter,
 For this promise of joy that at last I shall find.

SQUARE

(Acrostic)

S-square as a die, our lives should be
 Q-uestion ourselves so we may see.
 U-nder the guidance—the Eye Divine
 A-sking the Master to help us shine.
 R-eady the helping hand to share
 E-ver to cherish all that's fair.

I'M LONELY TODAY

The birds are all singing so sweetly,
My friends all have something to say;
But I am despondent and languid
And feeling so lonely today!

It is seldom you find me downhearted,
I'm usually jolly and gay;
My friends are all asking the question,
"What's making you somber today?"

Can it be some friend's just departed,
Some loved one been taken away!
I cannot tell what's the trouble,
That's making me lonely today.

Perhaps it is joys long departed,
Or loved ones at home far away!
O yes, but these never would haunt me
And make me so lonely today!

"You must have met with misfortune,
Disappointed in love, as they say,"
But that is never the trouble
That's making me lonely today!

Perhaps 'tis a sad revelation,
That soon I'm to pass away;
Oh, surely no such premonition
Is making me lonely today!

MOTHER

(Acrostic)

M-other, it only seems a few short days—
O-nly a glance across the lapse of time,
T-hat thou were here, with all thy winning ways.
H-appy New Year's and Christmas' merry chime
E-ach bring sweet memories of the past—
R-icher in thought, of days too dear to last!

I WOULD NOT CALL HIM BACK

I would not call my brother back,
Though he is just as dear;
For he might miss some heavenly bliss
If he were with me here.

I would not call my brother back,
I know they want him there;
His genial smile, so free from guile,
Will find friends everywhere.

I would not call my brother back,
From that Celestial realm;
My ship I'll guide across the tide,
Still faithful at the helm.

Call not my brother back to me,
Though love be not confessed;
No eye can see grief's stormy sea
Which rages in my breast!

Speed on, speed on, remaining years,
The winter's on the wane;
We'll meet once more on a sunny shore
When Spring shall come again.

The days seem years, since he has gone,
Yet call him back no more—
For he is free, and loveth me
From that Celestial shore!

And often when the boistrous gales
Are blowing wild and strong;
I tarry here upon this sphere
And think the days are long.

But I shall ever look for him,
Should he return the while.
His voice I'll hear, remembered, dear;
I'll see his old sweet smile.

I would not call him back to me,
From his Eternal home,—
Although I yearn for his return,
As, lonely, here I roam.

I would not call my brother back,
Though he is just as dear;
For he might miss some heavenly bliss
If he were with me here.

I would not call my brother back,
My waiting will be brief;
He'll watch and wait, there at the gate,
Till I have found relief.

If we could hear those strains of song
Descending from afar;
And loving words like homing birds
From out those gates a-jar,—

Would we not wish to be set free,
And join that Angel Band?
There to adore, forevermore,
And sit at His right hand.

I would not call my brother back,
Though he is just as dear;
For he might miss some heavenly bliss
If he were with me here!

January 16, 1900 (birthday)

IN THAT BEYOND

Somewhere there lies, in that beyond,
 A path our feet shall come to know,
 For walking there, today, are fond
 Familiar friends of long ago.

Cleaving the leaden clouds at last,
 That which dull sense has long concealed.
 Will open like a book so vast
 That all our dreams will stand revealed.

All time a glorious sunny day,
 We'll gather grain gnarled hands have sown
 In the long ago. Great winds shall sway
 Me o'er the hill to meet my own.

DR. WERTZ

(Acrostic)

W-ell, well, old boy, I thought I'd write a verse,
 E-xpecting, in due time, of course, to hear
 R-ight from headquarters, if the patient's worse.
 'T-is a sad case that causes us to fear,
 Z-eal in our chosen work oft pulls it through!

TIME

How swift the years are fleeting by,
Too soon engulfed in dimmest past;
Like fading ships far out at sail,
Time surges with the blast.
Or like a cloud that scuds on high
Till general darkness wraps the sky,
Or like a leaflet in the gale.

Into the boundless yet-to-be
Our bark is scudding out to sea,
While golden moments as they flee
Are numbered with the falling sand.
Nor will we heed the water's roar
Till we lie dashed upon some shore,
Some perilous unknown strand.

Time rolls unceasingly its course,
But have no fear of vanished hours,
Nor give way to remorse.
Night's darkness has no chain to bind
Or stay the manlier powers.
Thy native greatness needs no blind
To stay thee now for being kind.

Most precious boon gives lordly time
To those whose hearts with right incline—
The boon of peaceful thought.
Each worthy motive that is sought,
Each loving word and look and act,
Each eager errand spurred with tact
To help the helpless—is not lost!



WHEN THE OLD BELL RINGS FOR DINNER

When the old bell rings for dinner
 I am mighty glad to go;
 And it makes no difference where I be—
 In summer's heat or winter's snow;
 For about the time it starts to ring,
 I tell you what, 'tis a funny thing,
 But a fellow feels like takin' strides,
 For there's something wrong with one's insides,
 When the old bell rings for dinner.

When the old bell rings for dinner
 I just glance up at the sun;
 My old team will stop and whinner,
 And old Tige will romp and run;
 Everything is in commotion,
 All have but one common notion,
 Yes sir, we do some lively struttin' 'round,
 I tell you there's no more pleasin' sound
 Than when the old bell rings for dinner.

When the old bell rings for dinner,
Grandpa meets us at the door;
And he asks the same old questions
That he asked the day before;
If the crops are any better,
If the ground is gettin' wetter,
And if we found the "Chinch-bug" workin';
Says he, "I see you wasn't shirkin'
When the old bell rung for dinner."

When the old bell rings for dinner
Grandma lays her knittin' down,
Goes to work and drains the 'taters
And makes the gravy nice and brown;
And grandpa takes his old accustomed place
And says again the old accustomed grace—
God bless them both; I couldn't eat, I swear,
If I came home and found they wasn't there,
When the old bell rang for dinner!

A YEAR AGO

A year ago today, my dear,
I claimed you for my wife;
'Twas winter's eve—we did not grieve—
As from the grey-veiled heavens above
There fell, as soft as words of love,
Descending silent as a dove,
The pure and spotless flakes of snow;
Dispelling every thought of strife,
Uniting us as one in life,
A year ago!

Can it be true a year has passed
Since we moved on the hill?
Fond memories bring my Muse to sing
Of love that reigns from dawn to dawn,
And bears the joyful tidings on—
The record of a year has gone.
So tune my harp and let it ring,
With peals of joy our hearts to fill,
We never knew true love until
A year ago!

MEMORIAL

Sad news, sad news, our hearts are filled with grief,
Oh, messenger of Death, why come you here!
Is there no balm, to soothe or give relief,
To quench this rising sob and bitter tear?

Yet in our grief we know he is not dead,
But living in a brighter, grander sphere;
In realms above, he ever will be led
By Angel-hands of those who loved him here.

O joyful home—O glorious Spirit-land,
Home of the Soul, the boundless and the free,—
Within thy border all our loved ones stand
With outstretched arms to welcome him and me!

No, brother, we can never say good-bye!
We'll journey side by side as in our youth;
The change called death, will never break the tie
That binds our hearts in "Friendship, Love and Truth."

Yet such is life, its sorrows and its joys.
Oft these fraternal pleasures we did sip!
We were the only two, of all the boys
Who knew the secret word and mystic grip.

Yes, brother, when the springtime comes again,
And maples wave, and wild birds sing their lay;
I'll join them in their sweet and plaintive strain,
And chant a song for thee the live-long day!

Weep not, I say, our brother is not dead,
And, unpercieved, he lingers with us now;
We cannot hear that silent Spirit tread,
Or feel the gentle touch upon our brow.

"There is no death!" The leaves may fall, and flowers
May fade and pass away, birds cease to sing;
They only wait through the long winter hours,
The coming of the bright and gladsome spring.

Thus let us wait, where hopeful hearts belong;
The noiseless hands of time move on their way;
Within a few short years we'll join the throng,
Then we'll enjoy with him, Eternal Day!

How sad the thought, that one we held so dear
Should fall so young! He who was pure in heart—
Who gave such promise of great glory here—
Should go, ere he had seen the better part.

Be calm, sad heart, though lonely be the hours;
He'll try to help you fare life's journey through;
Then waiting in those bright celestial bowers,
He'll clasp you once again and welcome you.

A COLD-SORE

She had a cold-sore on her lip,
Some people tell;
'Twas caused by just one nectared sip
Which on it fell!

You see, we had been lovers long,
I liked her so—
And asked her if she thought 'twas wrong—
She didn't know!

Her eyes are blue, her teeth are white,
She's fair to see,—
'Twas all these things that fatal night
That tempted me!

I mean to ask her some bright day,
One single line—
I'll muster courage, and I'll say,—
"Will you be mine?"

My friends tell me most every day,
"You're getting bold."
I hide my grin—and simply say,
"She has a cold!"

1899

THE SIMPLE TRUTH

Some Churchmen may boast of the beauties of heaven,
And some of the horrors of hades may tell;
But the truth is found in this one simple sentence—
Each one of us makes his own heaven—or hell!

TO DOCTOR LYMAN DENTON

Just fifty years have come and gone,
While now you may look back upon
Your past career and life—
What changes have the swift years wrought,
Since in life's voyage you have sought
"To mingle in its strife."

"It ought to be a happy date"—
When friends throng to congratulate,
And wish you health for years.
Yet such is life, a changeful sea,
Its heaving waves toss you and me,
Mid blessings, trials, and fears.

You court the Muses now and then—
And still alert with tongue and pen,
You scan the printed page;
Yet battling with the ills of life,
Lessening heartaches, lessening strife,
Your smile improves with age.

Yes, Doctor, you have healed the sick
And not connived by magic trick,
To help along our race.
"Though certain Doctors will pretend,
Awhile, before they kill a friend,
To labor through his case."

Though you have lived these fifty years,
'Mid trials, hope, contentment, fears,
You're but in manhood's prime,—
It is my earnest wish and will,
That you full fifty more will fill,
And never cease to rhyme!

NOTE—Doctor Denton, of Minneapolis, is the author of "Among the Marigolds" and many other delightful poems. On his fiftieth anniversary Mrs. Denton requested many friends (especially poetic) to congratulate him in rhyme, hence the above.



WHEN PA GETS SICK

When Pa gets sick—I tell you what—
Things don't go right about the place;
For everything soon goes to pot
When Pa ain't 'round to say the grace!

We walk around so solemn-like,
And never whistle, laugh or sing;
And never get to take a hike
When Pa ain't there to run the thing.

When Pa gets sick we all can tell,
Things are so lonesome-like and still;
Ma never rings the dinner-bell
And no one holds poor little Bill.

Poor kid, it seems so hard to see
Him walk behind the house and cry;
One time he came up close to me
And whispered low, "Will Daddy die?"

Somehow the birds don't sing so sweet;
Old Tige won't answer to our call;
When people meet us on the street,
They talk of Father—that is all.

When Pa gets sick it's funny, but
The meals somehow don't taste the same;
We seem to all be in a rut
When Father isn't in the game.

Once, I recall, some years ago,
Pa had an awful stomach-ache;
And Ma, she called old Doctor Snow,
Who left some nasty stuff to take.

Pa yelled and rolled like all get-out,
He seemed to lose all sense of pride
"I simply have to yell and shout
To ease," he said, "the pain inside."

The Doctor fumbled in his hair
And wondered what he would do next;
He hadn't any time to spare,
For Father now was good and vexed.

He reached into his case and got
A thing he called a "hipoderm";
In Father's arm he sent a shot—
I tell you what, it made him squirm.

But soon he fell quite fast asleep,
And lay so peaceful on his bed
That every little while, we'd creep
Up close, to see if he was dead!

I tell you, we were mighty scared,
But Father woke a-feelin' prime;
And Ma, she said that he was spared
'Cause we kept prayin' all the time.

When Pa gets sick—I tell you what—
Thing's don't go right about the place;
For everything soon goes to pot
When Pa ain't 'round to say the grace!

ON THE DEATH OF PAT

I hear them say, Pat died today,
How well his face I knew.
Say, does he browse at half-way house,
Or get a ticket through?

A MIDNIGHT FANTASY

Hark! I hear a voice a-calling
From yon distant rocky cleft—
Weaker—fainter,—still a-falling
Till there's but a murmur left.

I hurried to the scene of danger,
In compassion and in fear;
Hanging from a rock, a stranger
Met my pitying vision here.

Then I, with a voice like thunder,
Cried with all my might and main,
“Hold on, stranger; hold on, stranger,
I will help you up again.”

Then I began a weary struggle
Up that cruel craggy height,
Hoping, praying I might save him
From a doom as dark as night.

Oh, the road was rough and rugged!
But on saving I was bent—
Speaking ever to the stranger
Words of courage as I went.

But his weakened hold had loosened
Ere I reached that craggy height,
Then he slipped down the embankment—
Rolling, tumbling out of sight.

When I saw that this had happened,
Burst from me a frightful scream,
Then, awakened to my senses,
I found it all to be a dream!

CHARMING CLOE

Since first I met my charming Cloe,
I've loved her eyes of blue,—
Her teeth of pearl that always show,
Her cheeks of rosy hue.

She always wears a pleasant smile,
And looks so trim and neat.
Her love is beaming all the while
From eyes so clear and sweet.

Lovely her brow and auburn hair,
Her voice as sweet as spring;
Her charm is like a summer's day,
It brightens everything.

More sweet than lilies first in spring,
Or primrose all aglow;
Oh, more than any earthly thing
I love my darling Cloe.

I'll not forget the happy place
We met, below the lane,
And lingering there a little space,
We pledged our troth again.

Now she has gone across the sea,
To visit home and friends;
Those smiling eyes are haunting me—
A charm, no other lends.

And often when the boistrous gales,
Are blowing wild and strong,
I linger here within the vales,
And think she tarries long.

And often in the autumn time,
I steal away from home;
To ponder o'er and muse in rhyme
Where we did often roam.

How sad would my poor life become,
How my poor heart would yearn,
If Cloe, my best beloved one
Were never to return.

I'm not content with life at best,
No matter where I roam;
My mind will never be at rest,
Till she is safe at home.

1895

SOMEWHERE; SOMETIME

Somewhere there lies a great Beyond—
A place of beauty, love and praise
Where we shall find again the fond
And cherished friends of other days.

Somewhere there lies, beyond the blue,
A haven of rest, it seems to me,
Which joyously we shall wander through
When souls from earth go winging free.

At last, we'll find, at last, we'll know
That which our fate has long concealed.
Though never knowing when we'll go,
We sense that there will be revealed,

Somewhere, sometime, someway, someplace,
The harvest that our hands have sown.
We'll cleave great winds, till, face to face,
We, once again, shall see our own!

UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE

We sail on Life's tempestuous Sea,
Unmindful of its water's roar;
We know not what our lot may be,
Or what the Fates may have in store.

Our life today is full of hope,
Though surging waves may intervene;
But ere we view a broader scope,
The hand of death may close the scene.

SPRINGTIME

How joyous seems the springtime,
When the snow-banks melt away;
When the frozen earth revives again,
And everything looks gay.

With singing birds, and prattling brooks,
And flowers nearly here;
We hail thee, Spring, with fresh'ning showers,
The gladdest of the year.

How sweet to see the distant hills,
In all their verdant bloom;
Where once we viewed the leafless tree,
And fields in all their gloom.

The landscape that once looked so drear,
With fields and forests bare,
Is now enriched with blooming flowers—
Their fragrance everywhere!

JOE WHITTINGTON

(Acrostic)

J-oyous he was, ever about the same—

O-bedient, friendly, trying to do his best;

E-ternally trying to win himself a name.

W-here'er he went, he was a pleasant guest;

H-appy, contented, striving for the goal—

I-n work so faithful, never a thought of fear;

T-ireless in study, or in play. The scroll

T-hat would have borne, so very soon, his name,

I-nscribed so proudly there, was brushed aside—

N-ever was he to reach his earthly aim.

G-reatness was hovering o'er him when he died—

T-ouched were our hearts with sorrow when death came.

O-ver the Borderland he's gone a while—

N-earer the Master, with that cheery smile!

NOTE—A nephew who was soon to graduate from Queen's University, Canada, when taken by the "Flu."



PAT'S EXPERIENCE WITH BEES

One day an old Irishman came from his plough
 With a horrible bunch on his face;
 "O Bridget," said he, "will ye look at me now?
 I am surely a sight uv disgrace!"

"Do ye know, I wuz singin' a Limerick song,
 And as busy as mortal could be,
 When a blamed bumble bee came a-buzzin' along,
 A-whistlin' his music to me.

"When first that I heard him, it gave me delight,
 For I thought of me fun when a lad;
 Says I, 'I'll be blamed if there's honey in sight
 I'll hunt up his nest wid me gad!"

"I tied me old handkerchief over me head,
 And took a walk up the fence row—
 Says I, 'Now I'm safe as a mortal a-bed,
 And the divil a care where I go!"

"I hadn't gone far, till some music I heard,
 O Bridget—I wished you'd been there;
 It welcomed me more that the song uv a bird
 When it chases sunbeams in the air.

"I s'pose you have heard uv the invisible choir,
Well, sure it wuz somethin' the same—
A-hearin' their music I niver would tire;
So, Bridget, don't have me to blame.

"I thought uv the honey they might have in store;
Me stomach wuz cravin' it bad.
The longer I waited, I thought uv it more,
Till I poked up their nest wid me gad.

"The worst mess uv bees that iver ye see
Came out there to greet me, ye know,
Says I, 'Why, I'm safe as a mortal can be
And ne'er will I strike ye a blow!'

"I stood there and whistled the 'Shamrock and Rose',
Niver thought they could git to me skin;
Till I felt a sharp pain, jist under me clothes,
Which rasimbled the pick uv a pin.

"I knew what it meant, as I strolled to me plough,
Till me walkin' broke into a run;
Says I, 'Why the buggers have gotten me now,
How I wish that I'd niver begun!'

"O Bridget, if you could've jist seen me dance,
As I gave thim a pace uv me mind,
When one uv thim crawled through a hole in me pants
And gave me a nip from behind.

"They got in me stockin's, they got in me hair,
And I tried hard to brush thim away;
But it seems they wuz distined to bother me there—
In a word, 'twas the divil to pay!

"Jist look what they've done to the calk uv me leg—
And me nose is as red as a bate;
Me eyes will soon close, and I can't move a peg;
And sure I can't sit on a sate.

"So Bridget, quick—send fer the Docther in haste,
Fer I fear that the swellin' is growin';
And, if it don't stop, jist phone fer the Praste,
And tell him yer Pat is a-goin'."

TO WINTER

O Winter, with your frost and snow,
Your biting north winds fiercely blow,
While brook and rivers cease to flow;
 No pleasant shower.
At times I think you try to show
 Your mighty power.

But gentle Spring will come again
With sweetest flowers and April rain.
Though you resist with might and main,
 You'll have to yield.
And your harsh rule will leave no stain
 On vale or field.

We hail thee, Spring, with freshening showers,
With birds and bees and buds and flowers!
How cold and lonely were the hours
 The winter through!
Once more we greet your fragrant bowers
 With thanks anew.

LINES ON MY BIRTHDAY

Can it be true I'm twenty-six today?
I do declare, somehow, I'm feeling old!
The wind without is blowing wild and cold,
And I am here alone, so far away!

Yes, it is January—there's the snow!
That dreary wind that's howling at the pane
Tells me my birthday has come round again,
Which makes me twenty-six years old, you know!

January 16, 1901

PEGGY

When Peggy gets mad, she is just like her dad,
She will grab up a poker, or broom;
I have nothing to say, but get out of the way,
For she seems to take plenty of room.

SILENT FRIENDS

The air is filled with voices,
There is music all around;
And silent friends are with us,
Though we hear not any sound.

When twilight mists enfold us,
And the world is hushed to rest;
We can almost hear the whispers,
From the islands of the blest.

Could we grasp the hands that greet us,
From the other, better shore,—
View the old-time friends that meet us,—
Loving friends gone on before!

Death is but a life supernal,
Angels guard and guide us well;
Soon we'll find the shore eternal
There forevermore to dwell!

THOUGHT ON SPRING

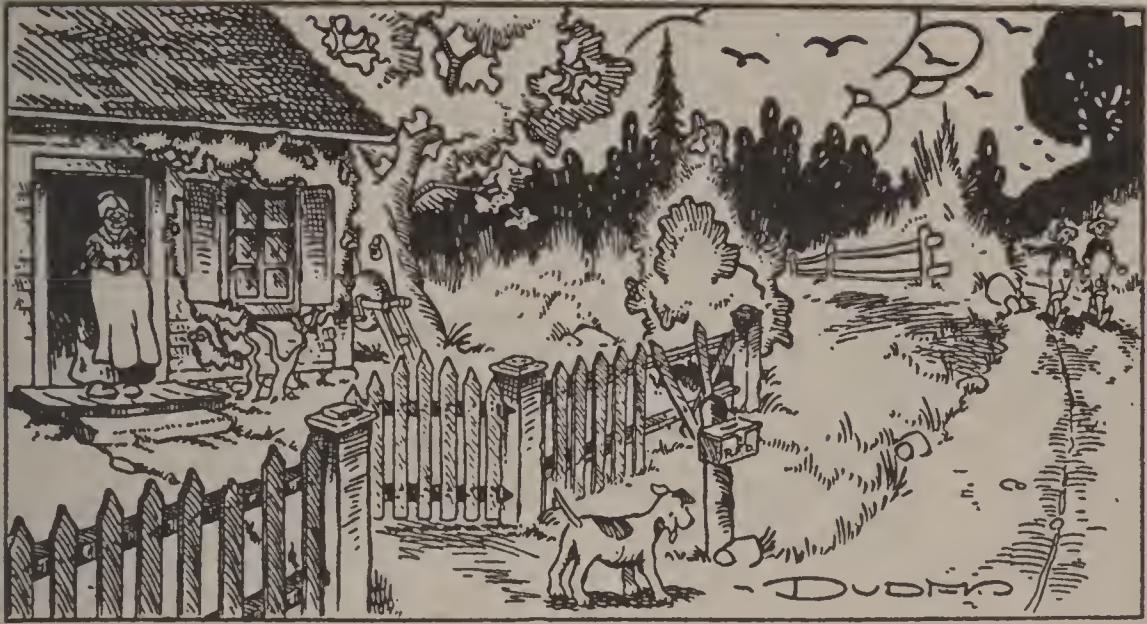
All Nature seems alive today;
Birds are a-wing and bees a-hum,
The robin sings his cheerful lay
And all rejoice that spring has come.

O Spring, we joy to have thee come!
We welcome these bright sunny hours;
All winter it has been so dumb—
No birds nor bees nor buds nor flowers!

PAT'S TRIBUTE TO HIS WIFE

Oh! my wife was always a burden to bear;
She scolds and she kicks and she knocks;
She'll throw my best Sunday-coat under the chair,
And darn me—but never my socks!

One time when home late, as you'll see in my pate,
There's a scar I can never restore,
She gave me a crack, and I lit on my back,
Then I kicked and I cussed and I swore!



LET'S WANDER BACK

Let's wander back, O brother, dear,
To boyhood's realm again;
Just let us lay dull care aside,
And wander back without our pride;
We shall forget the world is drear,
Forget that we are men!

Let's wander back to that old stream,
And wade there as before:
We'd love to splash in that old pool
Before we scamper off to school—
Where life again to us would seem
The dream-days as of yore!

O brother, let us wander back,
And live those golden hours!
Let's saunter through those sacred fields,
And live again where nature yields
A thousand thrills, and where our track
Is lost among the flowers!

Come, brother, let us hasten while
Our day of life is fair;
For soon the clouds will gather fast—
Let's hurry ere the night is past
We long to see that dear face smile,
That's waiting for us there!

Come, brother, let us hurry there,
I long to be away
To live beneath those summer skies,
To ne'er again break homestead ties,
To live where life is free and fair,
And nevermore to stray!

GIRLS

If I were asked the sweetest thing
That I could say, or I could sing,
From morning's dew to evening's pearls,
My answer would be simply, Girls!
When we're despondent, lone and sad,
And troubles nearly drive us mad,
And then girls sing and talk and smile,
It seems they all our cares beguile;
That lonely feeling steals away,
As pleasant fancies round us play
Of joys and smiles and lips and curls—
What would we do without the girls?

ON VIEWING THE MISSISSIPPI

The scene is grand! Across the water's waste
A cottage stands. Though in a strange domain,
Methinks I am at home among the hills—
Along the bubbling stream where, when a boy,
I wandered in the sunny month of June,
And dreamed of manhood with its varied joys.
But little did I think in those bright days
That I was building castles in the air.
The years sped swiftly by—and now I pause
And sigh to think the time at last is here.
How joyful seemed those happy days of youth;
I wonder and reflect. . . The past—the past.—
Can it be true that life is but a dream?



To view the lighthouse beacon from afar,
Shedding its rays on some poor mariner.

THINGS I LOVE

I love the song of birds at break of day,
The children out upon the lawn at play.
I love the meadow brook and tinkling rill,
The lowing herd upon the distant hill.
I love to stroll and mingle with the crowd—
Had I but power to read their thoughts aloud!
I love the winter scene, the leafless tree,
The desert waste—all have a charm for me.
I love to watch the cataract on its way,
Now madly foam and wildly toss its spray.
I love to hear the ocean's solemn roar
And watch the restless waves pound on the shore,
To view the lighthouse beacon from afar,
Shedding its rays on some poor mariner.
I love to hear, when night is gathering fast,
The approaching storm that rides upon the blast,
To listen to the angry winds at play,

Just like so many famished wolves at bay.
They laugh and sigh, they sob and moan and weep—
They whisper to themselves, and go to sleep.
'Tis then I love to hear the dashing rain
As it beats wildly 'gainst the window-pane,
Telling of love and sorrow—grief and woe,
Of friends now here, and friends of long ago,
Of tender joys, remembered from the past,
And ends in gentle lullaby at last.

LOVE

O Love, thou greatest gift from God to man,
Thy gentle touch can warm a heart of stone
And smooth the rough and stormy way of life—
Or bury one in bitterness and woe!
Sometimes a weary aching heart that beats
In hope and fear and restless discontent
(True to each vow, sincere in every act—
Only to be forlorn) will rise above
This variable state, and seek a wondrous goal—
A fountain-head of purest joy and peace,
Where love, content and happiness are found.
This pure and holy love will never die,
But like a river in its winding course,
Will travel on and on until it reach
The unfathomable ocean—whose depths are unexplored.

INSPIRATION

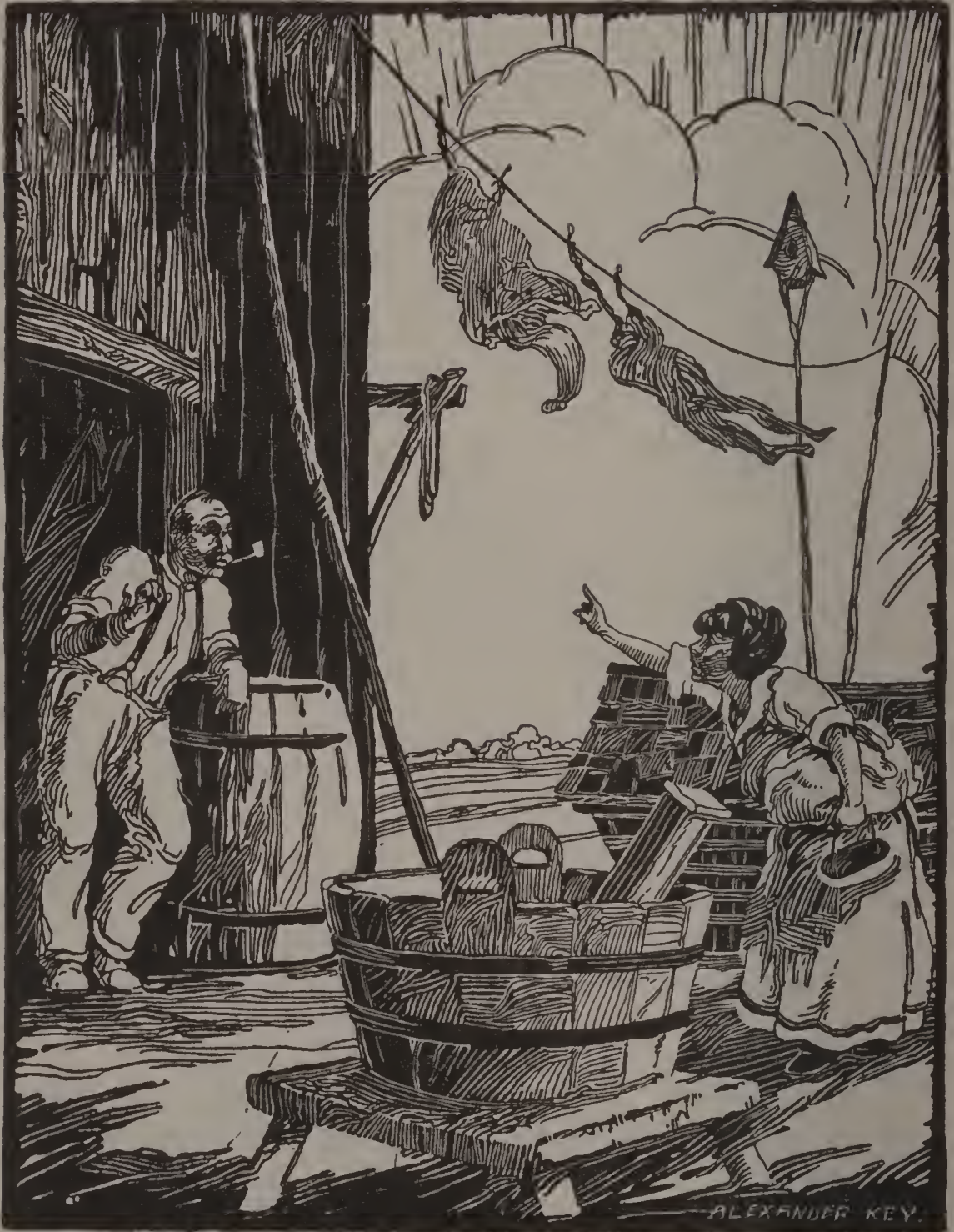
(Acrostic)

I-nvoluntary guest which bides within,
N-ature's own words which pulsate from the heart,
S-upreme your gifts that greatest powers impart;
P-ure as the dew the ecstasy you bring.
I-nfinite source of words, the gift we court,
R-esistless force that moves all mighty men,
A-ssuasive power to thrill with tongue and pen,
T-ruth is thy symbol, honor is thy fort,
I-nflux of thought, and joy exquisite;
O-bey the impulse that its pleasures give.
N-ow is the time to look and act and live!



And often, through the summer-time,
When farmers want an outing;
They gather up their hook and line,
For Watson Creek, a-trouting.

See page 65.



Our wash-day is a nuisance, in a mere domestic way;
But, it sort of comes in handy; for, sometimes we've much to say,
She tells me all my many faults, my misgivings, so to speak;
And has 'em on her tongue's end, too, there stored up for a week.

See, Wife and I on Wash Day, page 41.

INDEX

Yule-Tide Thoughts—To Mother.....	5
My Home By The Sea.....	7
Words—Or Wreaths?	8
The Deserted House.....	8
They Do Not Mean It.....	10
When The Preacher Comes To Dinner.....	11
James Whitcomb Riley.....	12
With Your Conscience And God.....	13
Passage	13
I. O. O. F.....	13
“Somebody’s Mother”	14
I Remember, I Remember.....	15
Dreaming Of Mother.....	16
Since Baby Came.....	17
Robert Burns	20
Dedercation	21
A Hit	21
The New Wimmin.....	23
Hold Them Hosses, Saller Ann.....	26
The Drouth	27
On Keats	29
Tribute To My Wife.....	29
Keeping Right	30
A Reflection	30
To Father	31
The Linguist	34
I Wisht Ter Gubs The Kids Wuz Back.....	35
Twilight	36
Reminiscent	37
Reflection	40
Wife And I On Wash-Day.....	41
To Mother	43
The Moon	44
Peterson	45
Sea-Moods	45
Reveries Of The Past.....	46

INDEX — *Continued*

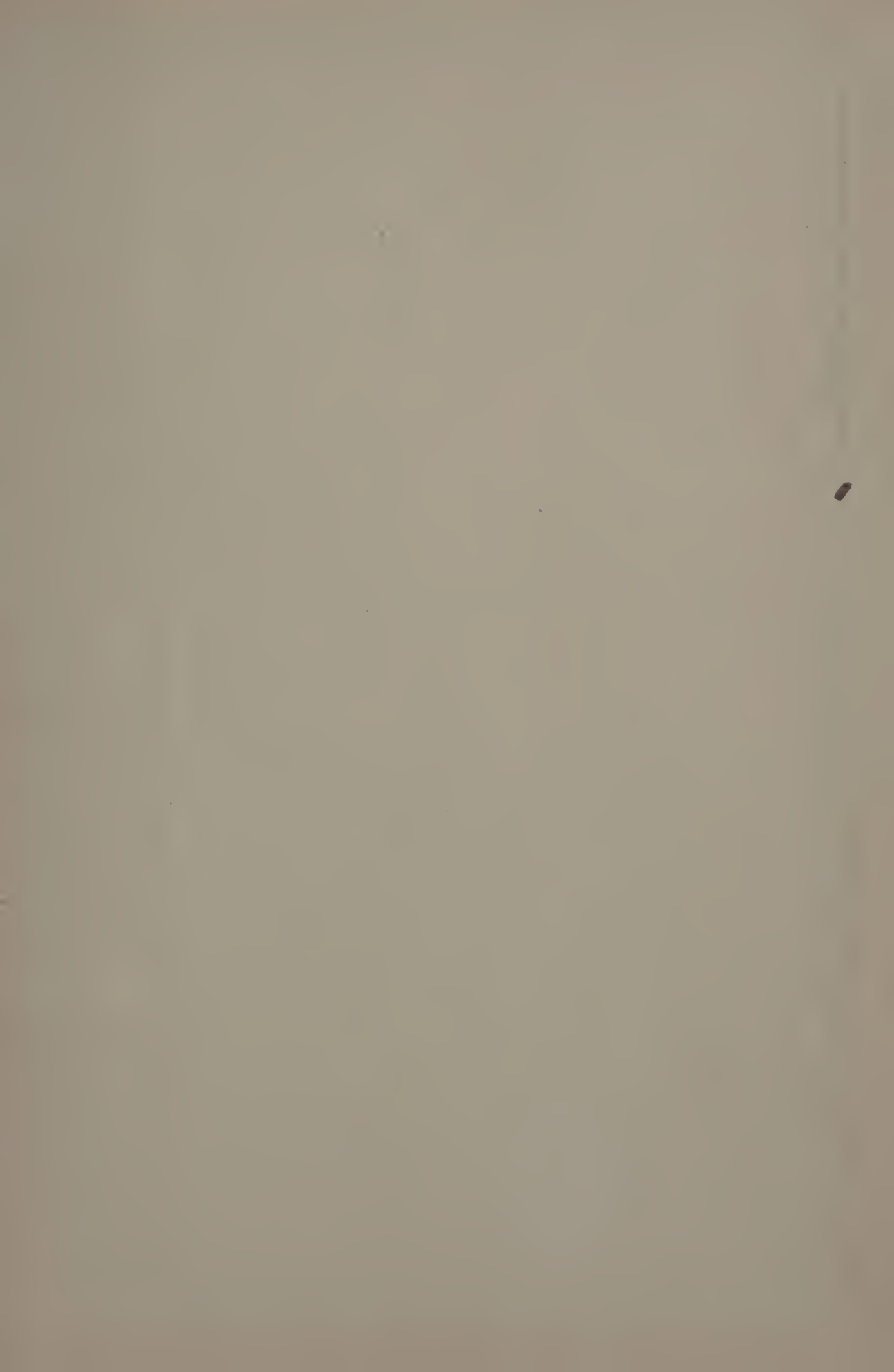
Dr. C. F. Taylor.....	47
My Books	48
Inspiration—A Silent Friend.....	49
Masonry	50
Somewhere Out There.....	50
To My Wife.....	51
When I Pass On.....	52
To My Absent Valentine.....	53
Always Be Kind.....	54
To Henry Field.....	55
To Bill	58
A Sonnet	59
Lines In An Album.....	60
The Prairie	60
Saint Patrick's Day Banquet.....	61
The Slave	62
Do And Dare.....	63
Watson Creek	65
My Soldier Boy.....	66
Inspiring Thought	70
Lenora	71
To T. C. Buxton, M. D.....	73
That Big-Bellied Muscle!.....	74
Life	76
A Morning Thought.....	76
Contentment	77
A Tale	78
My Retreat	84
A Question	86
Pointed Advice	86
Our Courtship	87
Sweet Marie	88
A Tribute	90
My Choice	91
Prescience	91
Departed Friends	92
Square	92

INDEX — *Continued*

I'm Lonely Today.....	93
Mother	93
I Would Not Call Him Back.....	94
In That Beyond.....	96
Dr. Wertz	96
Time	97
When The Old Bell Rings For Dinner.....	98
A Year Ago.....	99
Memorial	100
A Cold-Sore	101
The Simple Truth.....	101
To Doctor Lyman Denton.....	102
When Pa Gets Sick.....	103
On The Death Of Pat.....	104
A Midnight Fantasy.....	105
Charming Cloe	106
Somewhere; Sometime	107
Uncertainty Of Life.....	108
Springtime	108
Joe Whittington	109
Pat's Experience With Bees.....	110
To Winter	112
Lines On My Birthday.....	112
Peggy	113
Silent Friends	113
Thought on Spring.....	114
Pat's Tribute to His Wife.....	114
Let's Wander Back.....	115
Girls	116
On Viewing the Mississipi.....	117
Things I Love.....	118
Love	119
Inspiration	120

NOTE—The poems mentioned below have been set to very appropriate music by a noted Chicago teacher and composer of music and the same is nicely designed, and any or all of them, as well as copies of this volume may be secured at any time by addressing the author, DR. E. A. NASH, *Peterson, Iowa*. A printed slip descriptive of the songs will be sent on request. Poems set to music are:

“MY ABSENT VALENTINE”
“WITH YOUR CONSCIENCE AND GOD”
“SINCE BABY CAME”
“LET’S WANDER BACK”
“I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER”



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